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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

A STUDY OF GORGIAS'S "ON NON-BEING OR ON NATURE"

by

STEPHEN R. LEIGHTON

(C)

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF ARTS

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled A Study of Gorgias's "On Non-Being or On Nature" submitted by Stephen R. Leighton in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

Gorgias of Leontini in his On Non-Being or On Nature attempts to destroy the philosophical edifice of the Eleatics, especially Parmenides and Melissus. This he does by arguing that neither being nor non-being nor being and non-being exist; hence nothing exists. Gorgias goes on to attack the more general philosophic community of the time by arguing that even were something to exist, it could not be known, and even were it to exist and be known, it could not be talked about. A translation and an account of the translation of the arguments recorded by Sextus Empericus will be undertaken. Doing this will be preliminary to an explanation of Gorgias's treatise as recorded by both Sextus Empericus and a member of Aristotle's school. As well, an analysis of each argument, the initial hypothesis, and Gorgias's use of the word "being" will be undertaken.

PREFACE

Concerning Gorgias it has been said; "Starting with the initial advantage of having nothing in particular to say, he was able to concentrate all his energies on saying it".[1] This expresses a sentiment that is anything but foreign regarding Gorgias. One might expect our examination of Gorgias's On Non-Being or On Nature to spend a good deal of time defending Gorgias from this charge. No such endeavor will be made here. Rather it will be assumed that the work is a serious piece of philosophy. Gorgias will be examined as a sceptic who argues against the work of his forefathers. If Gorgias's work proves as captivating and of as much merit as other Pre-Socratics, then we will have a complete and interesting study of this philosopher. By doing this we will have saved him from the scorn he has unjustly received.

Before taking up the arguments in Gorgias's treatise, it is appropriate to say something about the man, his relationship to other Greek philosophers, our sources of information, our procedures of examination, as well as other related topics. Let us begin with the man and his place in Greek Philosophy.

Gorgias is characterized as a Sophist. He is thought to have been born about 485 or 490 B.C. and to have lived about one hundred

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[1] Denniston, Greek Prose Style, page 12.

and eight years. He was, then a contemporary of Plato being about fifty years older than Plato. Gorgias's philosophic predecessors seem to be those of what we might call the Eleatic tradition. This tradition begins with Parmenides and Zeno and carries on at least as far as Plato. Although Gorgias is to be seen as a member of this tradition his position is unique. Instead of acting as a thinker who elaborates, or develops an approach to philosophy, Gorgias is one who argues, within the confines of a system, but to the destruction of that system. Hence it is Gorgias's task to undermine on its own terms the work of what is probably the most profound movement in Pre-Socratic philosophy. The work of Gorgias becomes of interest not only as the next set of arguments, in a tradition, (following on the arguments of Zeno and Melissus), but also because the development leads so far away from the intent of Parmenides. This latter point we immediately see in the opposition in the conclusions the two draw, but we will also see this in Gorgias's way of considering the three routes (being, non-being, being and non-being) his treatment of thinking and being and so forth.

Having sketched Gorgias and his place in Greek philosophy let us turn to our sources.

On Non-Being or On Nature has been recorded by two authors; Sextus Empericus[1] and a member of Aristotle's school.[2] Both

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[1]Hereafter known as SE.

[2]This person is often referred to as Pseduo-Aristotle and hereafter will be known as PA.

recorders divide the argument into three sections: the first, that nothing exists; the second, that if something exists, it is not able to be considered; the third, that if something exists and is able to be considered, it cannot be spoken of.

The argument as recorded by SE is quite well preserved. Unfortunately, that is not at all the case with PA. Many of the arguments as recorded by PA are missing, incomplete, corrupt beyond translation and summarized. The problem of adequate texts presents a difficulty for us; how are we to approach Gorgias? Since the recording of SE is complete this treatise becomes the centre of our attention. However, we will not disregard the recording of PA, but will use it to supplement our knowledge of Gorgias. Thus we will keep track of where the two recorders see the arguments as similar and where they diverge. The further task of trying to construct the "real" argument from two diverging recordings will not be attempted. Even were the text of PA not in such poor condition it seems doubtful that one could succeed in a reconstruction of the "real" argument. Thus, instead of reconstruction, we only use the text of PA to supplement our knowledge of Gorgias.

The structure of our examination will be along the following lines. In our first chapter we will give a translation and justification of our main source. For a translation of PA we rely on the translation of Loveday and Forester.[1] Looking at a translation of the

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[1] The Works of Aristotle Translated into English, W. D. Ross Editor Oxford at the Clarendon Press, 1913.

text of PA from this point of view rather than translating and justifying the work (as we do with SE) is not the best method possible, however, it is felt to be adequate since the treatise of PA is not used as a primary source. Our second chapter will deal with the first section of Gorgias's thesis, the hypothesis that nothing exists. In this chapter we will attempt to appreciate the arguments and hypothesis Gorgias gives, evaluating and analyzing them. As well, we will inquire into what Gorgias means by "being". In our third chapter we will examine the hypothesis that if something exists, it cannot be considered. Here again we will analyze and evaluate the arguments. In our fourth chapter we will evaluate and analyze Gorgias's third hypothesis that if something exists and can be considered it cannot be spoken about. In these last two chapters we will show the relationship between the hypotheses offered there and the hypothesis in Gorgias's first section, as well as the relationship between being and beings.

Before completing our introductory remarks, mention must be made of an article by G. B. Kerferd entitled "Gorgias on nature or that which is not".[1] Kerferd took considerable effort to reintroduce Gorgias to the philosophic forum; for that he deserves considerable praise. This thesis, however, does not make much reference to Kerferd. That may seem odd, but is not actually so

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[1] G. B. Kerferd, "Gorgias on Nature or that which is not". In Phronesis, Volume 1, 1955.

when one considers what Kerferd attempted to do. The article attempts to find the argument behind the recordings and, as well, it suggests that the argument as now seen in SE is not intelligible preferring to see Gorgias arguing about the possibility of predicating "to be" of being.[1] Hence Kerferd attempts to emend the text in conformity with this thesis. Since these are departing points for Kerferd and since I think both that the search for the "real" argument to be risky business, (holding that the arguments of SE can be perfectly understood as they now stand) and that there is no reason to see Gorgias arguing about the predicability of "to be", there is not a great deal in common between our approaches. One ought to try the approach of this thesis before looking to emend the text and combine readings. If our attempt is successful, it makes Kerferd's work unnecessary. If we fail, then perhaps one ought to take up Kerferd's method. Nevertheless the reader must examine the approach of Kerferd and decide on his own.

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[1] Calogero in Studi sull Eleatismo (Roma 1932) was the first to suggest that Gorgias's first section was about the predication of "to be" of being. His work is unavailable to me since I do not read Italian. However, from other sources I have gathered some of the force of Calogero's remarks. I find this suggestion not to be required for an understanding of Gorgias, and as well there seems to be no reason to move to such a reading. There is reason to see philosophers such as Lycorphon to be talking about "to be", but there are no external sources suggesting that Gorgias ought to be read in this way. Reading the text as if it is concerned with the predicability of the verb "to be" is not impossible; it is, however, unwarranted.

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Chapter One: Translation and Explanation

In this chapter a translation of Gorgias, as recorded by SE, is offered. After this the translation is examined to explain what are thought to be the important areas of it.

Since the explanation of the translation is undertaken with the interests of a philosopher in mind rather than those of a classicist, the defense of the translation will concern only those important difficulties that will alter the meaning of the argument. Let us look at two examples that will illuminate what will and will not be discussed in this chapter. There seems to be good reason to believe that the opening of paragraph sixty-five might be read as "Gorgias of Leontini belongs to the same group . . ." or "Gorgias of Leontini began from the same position . . .". Both translations are quite acceptable. Still it is likely that one translation is better than the other. To give a full defense of the translation, an issue such as this would need to be considered. In this work no mention is made of this issue. Because both translations are good, and because neither will alter the direction or point of the argument, we remain silent on this issue. When, however, Gorgias is recorded as ētoi to on estin ē . . . a great deal of time is spent discussing which is the best translation. Which translation is chosen does make a great deal of difference regarding the meaning of the passage.

From these remarks we can draw the conclusion that the explanation of the translation is, by no means, complete, but rather limited

to those areas which seem to be important to the direction of the argument. Thus the analysis is limited to the purposes of a philosophical account, which is exactly the correct set of limitations. To do more is unnecessary here and quite beyond the purposes and abilities of the author.

A last point about the defense of a translation should be made. It seems that only in defending one's translation, and as such putting that translation on the line, will we ever make progress in uncovering the truth regarding Gorgias. That clearly is our goal and so one's own self-protection must be cast aside. Here is a complete translation of Gorgias as recorded by SE.

65) Gorgias of Leontini began from the same position as those who were destroying the criterion, but not according to the same line of attack as the circle about Protagoras. For in his work Concerning Non-Being or On Nature Gorgias makes three main points successively: one and the first that nothing exists; secondly, that even if there is something, it is not understandable by men; thirdly, that even if it is graspable, in truth it is not able to be expressed and is uninterpretable to him who is nearby.

66) So he argues in the following way that nothing exists. For it something exists, either being exists, or non-being exists or both being and non-being exist. But neither does being exist as he will show, nor non-being as he will explain, nor both being and non-being as even this he will demonstrate. Therefore there is not anything.

67) Now non-being does not exist. For if non-being exists, something at the same time will and will not exist. For in so far as it

((non-being)) is thought of as non-being, it will not exist. But, in so far as it ((non-being)) is non-being, then contrariwise it will exist. But it is altogether absurd that something at the same moment is existing and not existing. Therefore non-being does not exist. And in another way, if non-being exists, then being will not exist. For these are opposite to each other. And if existence applies to non-being, non-existence is applied to being. Certainly it is not the case that being does not exist, nor will non-being exist.

68) Indeed, neither does being exist. For if being exists, either it is everlasting or created or at the same time everlasting and created. But neither is it everlasting nor created nor both as we will show. Therefore, being does not exist. For if being is everlasting (for one must begin here) it does not have any beginning.

69) For everything created has a certain beginning. But the everlasting rendered as uncreated does not have a beginning. But not having a beginning it is boundless. But if it is boundless, then it is nowhere. For if it is somewhere, container is different from that ((being)) and so being, being surrounded by something ((place)), will no longer be boundless. For the surrounder is larger than the surrounded. But nothing is larger than the unbounded. Therefore the unbounded is not in any place.

70) Nor is it surrounded in itself. For then container and the contained will be the same. Being will become two, both place and body. For the container is place, but the contained is body. This is absurd. Thus being is not both container and contained..

Therefore if being is everlasting, it is unbounded. But if it is unbounded, it is nowhere. But if it is nowhere, it does not exist. So if being is everlasting, it is not being to begin with.

71) Now, being is not able to be created. For if it has been created, it has been created out of being or non-being. But it is not created out of being; for if it is being, then it is not created but already exists. Nor is it created out of non-being; for non-being is not able to create something because of the fact that the creator of something ought from necessity to share of existence. Therefore being is not even created.

72) Now according to the same considerations it is not both at the same time created and everlasting. For these attributes are destructive of each other. So if being is everlasting, it has not been created, and if created, it is not everlasting. Therefore if being is neither everlasting nor created nor both, then being would not exist.

73) Again, if being exists, it is either one or many. But it is neither one nor many as will be proved. Thus being does not exist. For if it is one, it is either a certain quantity or continuous or a magnitude or it is body. But whatever of these it may be, it is not one. For whichever is posited as a quantity is divided. Being continuous it will be cut up. Similarly, being considered as a magnitude it will not be undivided. If being is a body, it will be three-fold, for it has both height and breadth and depth. But to say that being is none of these is absurd. So being is not one.

74) Nor is it many; for if it is not one, then it is not many. For

the many is a synthesis of ones. Wherefore when the one is destroyed, so also is the many. But that neither being nor non-being exists is manifest from this.

75) But that both do not exist, both being and non-being is easily inferred. For if non-being exists and being exists, then non-being will be the same as being with respect to existence. And because of this neither one of them exists. For that non-being does not exist is agreed. But we argue by positing being the same as non-being. And so it ((being)) will not exist.

76) It is certain then that if being is the same as non-being, it is not possible for both to exist. For if both exist, they are not the same thing, but if they are the same thing, both do not exist. From which it follows that there is nothing. For if neither being, nor non-being, nor both exist and beyond this nothing is conceived, then there is nothing.

77) One must similarly undertake to show that even if something should exist, it would be unknownable and inconceivable to a man. Gorgias says: "For if things thought (about) are not beings, then being is not thought (about)". And he says this according to the following argument: If it happens to things thought (about) that they are white, then it happens to white things to be thought (about). In the same way he argues that if it happens to things thought (about) that they are not beings, then according to necessity, it will happen to beings that they are not thought (about).

78) Therefore this inference is sound and logical: "If the things thought (about) are not beings, being is not thought (about)." But the

things thought (about) (for this needs to be considered) are not beings, as we will prove. Therefore, being is not thought (about). Now it is evident that the things thought (about) are not beings.

79) For if the things thought (about) are beings, then all the things thought (about) exist and in whichever way someone should think them. This is unlikely. But if it is, it is trivial. For should someone think of a man flying or a chariot running on the sea, there is not therefore a man flying or a chariot running on the sea. Therefore, things thought (about) are not beings.

80) In addition to these arguments if things thought (about) are beings, non-beings will not be thought (about). For opposites occur with opposites, and non-being is the opposite of being. And because of this, in all ways, if being thought (about) applies with being, then not being thought (about) will be applied to non-being. However, this is absurd, for even Scylla and Chimera and many of the non-beings are thought (about). Therefore being is not thought (about).

81) Just as the things seen are said to be visible because of the fact that they are seen, so the things heard are said to be audible because of the fact that they are heard. And we do not throw out the seen because it is not heard nor do we dismiss the heard because it is not seen. For each one ought to be judged by the appropriate sense but not by another sense. Thus too the things thought (about) will exist ((be thinkable)) even though they should not be looked at by the visual faculty, nor heard by the hearing, for the reason that they are grasped by the appropriate criterion.

82) Therefore if someone thinks that chariots are running on the sea, even if he does not see them, he is obliged to believe that chariots are running on the sea. But this is absurd. Therefore being is not thought nor even apprehended.

83) But if it were apprehended it could not be passed on to another. For if beings are visible and audible and commonly perceptible things which do indeed subsist outside the senses, then of these, the visible things are graspable by the sight and the audible things by the hearing and not crosswise. Then how is it possible for one to reveal these things to another?

84) That by ((means of)) which we reveal is a logos. But the things subsisting outside, namely beings are not a logos. Therefore we do not reveal things to other people but a logos, which is other than the objects subsisting. Therefore as the visible thing would not become the audible thing and conversely, so since being subsists outside, then our logos could not arise ((become being)). But that which is not a logos would not be revealed to another.

85) Indeed a logos, he says, is composed of things falling upon us from without. That is, from things perceptable to the senses. From the meeting with a flavor there arises in us a logos which is expressive of that quality. And from the incidence of a color there arises in us a logos which is expressive of color. But if this is so, a logos is not indicative of something external, but rather the external becomes revealor of the logos.

86) Moreover it is not possible to say that logos subsists in the way that things visible and audible subsist so that things subsisting

namely beings can be revealed from a thing itself subsisting namely a being. For if the logos also subsists, but it is different from the rest of the things subsisting, the visible bodies would be considerably different from the logos. For the visible is comprehended through one organ and the logos through another. Thus a logos could not point out the many external things, just as they do not make clear the nature of each other.

Now that we have recorded the argument in full, we shall go back and offer the translation examining the translation section by section.

> 65) Gorgias of Leontini began from the same position as those who were destroying the criterion, but not according to the same line of attack as the circle about Protagoras. For in his work Concerning Non-being or On Nature Gorgias makes three main points successively: one and the first that nothing exists; secondly, that even if there is something, it is not understandable by men; thirdly, that even if it is graspable, in truth it is not able to be expressed and is uninterpretable to him who is nearby.

In the sixth line of this translation we have used the word "something" although ti does not appear in the text at this point. "Something" needs to be understood as the subject of the sentence although there is nothing that comes earlier that would indicate that this is so. Thus the subject must be sought elsewhere. In the second line of paragraph sixty-six Gorgias repeats the sentence and this time ti is included, thus we should be able to bring this word forward to sixty-five. Doing so makes Gorgias's point perfectly intelligible and makes the position consistent.

> 66) So he argues in the following that nothing exists. For if something exists, either being exists, or non-being exists, or both being and non-being exist . . .

This passage may be translated in a number of different ways. The first underlined phrase may be read as; a) "nothing is", or b) "nothing exists", or c) "there is nothing", or lastly, d) "it is nothing". The second underlined clause may be rendered as a) "something is", b) "something exists", or c) "there is something" or lastly, d) "it is something". Additional complications arise because the verb may be rendered as "is the case" or "is possible".

Let me begin by eliminating the "is the case" and "is possible" renderings of the verb; we then may return to consider the other options for translation. Holding that nothing "exists" over the "is possible" translation makes better sense of Gorgias's arguments when he begins his second and third sections. If Gorgias were to grant that something were possible but even then it could not be thought or spoken of, he would have a less impressive argument than were he to grant something existed showing that even then it could not be thought of or spoken of. The "is possible" translation makes the second and third sections of Gorgias's argument less contraversial than were the arguments to be translated as "exists". That is to say were one to hear that even though something were possible, still it could not be thought of or spoken of; this would not be as hard to believe as if one were to allow that even though something existed one could not speak or think about it. Furthermore, it is quite clear from the arguments in the first section alone, from Gorgias's nihilism, that he adopts the more contraversial rather than the less contraversial stand. Thus we reject the "is possible" translation.

The "is the case" understanding of the argument is more difficult to reject. Still it seems we can show that this interpretation is not a very likely one. This is done by examining Gorgias's one/many argument as well as his remarks on generation.

The one/many argument is already in the tradition: originating from Zeno. Zeno's argument seems to attack the existence of "material things". Evidence for this can be found in Plato's Parmenides where Zeno's argument is viewed as an attack on those who, contra Parmenides, posit the many (for example the atomists). Zeno's argument is used to enquire into whether certain things exist. Gorgias, as one who takes traditional arguments to different conclusions, must take up the arguments in the same way. Thus it seems fair to conclude that Gorgias is concerned with whether things exist or not.

Gorgias's argument concerning generation makes better sense if it is understood to be arguing whether something exists or not, rather than whether something is the case; that is, the question of generation seems more aligned with considerations of whether something has come into existence rather than whether something is the case.

In order that we may be able to decide which of these remaining possible translations is most likely, (a), (b), (c), or (d), it is necessary to consider the type of argument that Gorgias is now presenting. The argumentation used by Gorgias will determine certain boundaries for what is appropriate as a translation if the argument is going to be successful. These restrictions will lead us

to certain decisions when considering which way Gorgias is to be translated.

One might think that the task of seeing the greater intention, or mode of argument, of an author, in order that one be able to decide upon a translation of a particular passage, is a dubious procedure insofar as the greater intention is inaccessible until the details of the passage are worked out. Such a view, however, is too suspicious. We are quite able to understand the general aim of an author even though we do not have a refined translation. Understanding the general intent will then put us in a better position to refine the translation.

Gorgias argues via a reductio ad absurdum.[1] Disputing in this fashion one begins by allowing the opponent's position, which is usually the opposite of the desired conclusion. After granting this assumption, one then attempts to derive certain consequences which simply cannot be accepted by the opponent. Thus the opponent is forced to reject these consequences, as well as the premises from which they were derived. The original premise, the opponents thesis, then, is rejected and one thereby lends support to one's own position.

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[1]There seems to be some problem in distinguishing modus tollens from the reductio ad absurdum. This issue is not one I wish to explore. In calling the argument a reductio ad absurdum I go along with Kalish and Montague in their Logic: Techniques of Formal Reasoning. In any case, whether we call the argument a reductio or whether we call it modus tollens is of little importance. What is important is the manner in which the argument has been set forth.

The above characterization seems to be an orthodox version of the reductio. In the case at hand, the argument is slightly more complex and hence deserves further elaboration. Gorgias's argument follows the above pattern but has a twist in what the unacceptable consequences are. Usually the consequences are something that has not arisen in the argument before but that the opponent cannot accept. In this argument, it is Gorgias's own position that comes forth as the unacceptable consequences. This is to say that Gorgias allows the opponent the opponent's conclusion, but from this conclusion Gorgias is able to extract his own conclusion as a consequence. Thus the interlocutor is driven from his own position for two reasons: first, Gorgias's position is a consequence of the interlocutor's position; thus from the interlocutor's own position Gorgias's position follows. Second, from the interlocutor's own position there is an unacceptable consequence, namely that nothing exists; thus we are forced to abandon the position that something exists and hence adopt the position that nothing exists.

There is another interesting characteristic of Gorgias's reductio. In performing the reductio Gorgias is giving an analysis of the hypothesis such that all the alternatives lead to his conclusion and none of them lead to the position of his opponents. In doing so, Gorgias is not particularly concerned with investigating "emperical reality", he is not looking and seeing, rather he is arguing that things must be understood to be in a certain way. This methodology will lead to certain consequences with regard to what will qualify as a counter-argument.

Knowing the general outline of the argument helps us to decide upon a translation because we can see that in his argument Gorgias contrasts (ti) esti and ouden estin (the latter being his own position). We understand now that these two views are constantly played off against each other, and thus are seen as alternative positions. The holding of the one view necessitates the abandonment of the other. For Gorgias, the one view is a counter to the other.

That these phrases are used to create an opposition implies that they must be translated in a fashion that preserves this opposition. This means that the translations, though leading to opposite conclusions, must in some sense be parallel. Our project now becomes twofold. We must set up what the parallel translations are; as well, we must decide which set of translations is best and why. The parallel translations are the following:

1. "It is nothing" and "It is something".[1]

These two are seen as parallel in that they illustrate what we might call a moderate scepticism. The first phrase puts forth a position as to what it is, the second phrase counters with scepticism.

But why is this a moderate scepticism?, or better still what is a moderate scepticism? By saying "it" a subject of discourse is assumed. By saying "is something" we go on to identify what we

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[1] Ti can be rendered as "something" or "anything". It is important to keep "anything" in mind as part of the force of Gorgias's argument.

meant to be talking about when we said "it". By saying "is nothing" we dismiss it as something of importance, although we may still maintain that there is an it. With either phrase there is something that is being talked about; this remains unquestioned. What is questioned is only what the "it" refers to. Thus "scepticism" because the argument concludes in favor of nothing, and "moderate scepticism" because it is assumed that indeed we do talk about something when talking about what "it" refers to.

2. "There is something" and "There is nothing".

These options demonstrate a more radical sort of scepticism. Here it is not even clear that there is something to be talked about. Gorgias, on this reading, sets out for himself a very different task. Here he is asking himself whether there is anything at all. To use the language of the first alternative, we might say that here Gorgias is wondering whether "it" can refer to anything.

3. "Something exists" and "Nothing exists".

These translations, as well, have a parallel structure. These alternatives do not seem to be different in force from (2), except that this translation seems to be somewhat more elegant. Thus if we should decide for option (2) over (1), then we should choose (3) over (2).

Let us now turn to the issue of which of the translations should be chosen. The more radical view, (2), would seem superior to the less radical view, (1), for a number of reasons. The first reason is that the more radical task seems more in keeping with the work of Parmenides and Melissus. One would expect Gorgias to follow

these philosophers to some extent. This expectation is born out by Gorgias's concern with to on, the three paths, thinking and being, as well as other similarites (which will become apparent later). Because of these similarites, it would seem that Gorgias, like Parmenides, would be concerned with the very basic question of whether there is anything we can talk about.

The second reason for translating Gorgias in the more radical manner concerns making sense of the rest of this argument. If we adopt the more radical view, then we are better able to see how the second and third sections follow. Gorgias's argument would be that after finding that nothing exists, he acts as if some things did exist. But even from this assumption it turns out that there are unfortunate consequences for those who think that there are things (or is a thing). This makes those who contend that something exists appear even more absurd than they did previously. Their view has been shown to be wrong, but even were it correct, it is bound by such bizarre consequences--you can neither think about the thing, nor say anything about it--that, for these reasons alone, the position would have to be rejected. As well, Gorgias's opponents are put in the uncomfortable position of neither being able to say or think about being, Gorgias's position, or any other position for that matter. However, should we adopt the more moderate interpretation of Gorgias's argument--that of identifying--then the argument is not quite so effective. Gorgias would be trying to identify what there is. None of the three alternatives are acceptable and thus we can not identify the it. However, for the

sake of showing further absurdites in his opponents position he assumes one of the alternatives, by identifying it as being. But this moderate interpretation of the argument now has a difficulty not found in the radical interpretation. In both the radical and the moderate interpretations, Gorgias goes on to talk about being and beings. With both interpretations the second and third paths are ignored. The neglect of the two paths is more acceptable on the radical interpretation than on the moderate interpretation. One is naturally inclined, when wondering whether there is anything, to assume that it is being. We have Parmenides to give us a precedent. Thus the ignoring of the other two paths seems not too hard to deal with. However, when the case is identifying what it is, we do not have strong inclinations as to what it should be. Thus it seems that the failure to consider the two paths that are ignored would be hard to deal with in the case of identifying. The second reason for taking the more radical interpretation is, then, that on this account, the argument follows more smoothly with fewer gaps in the argument.

The last and least argument in favor of the more radical interpretation is that it befits a sophist to be involved with a more radical project than a less radical task.

Having explained why the underlined words have been translated as they have, we now need to justify our translations of the alternatives that seem to be the most likely candidates for ētoi to on esti ē to mē on ē kai to on kai to mē on. We can take this in the following ways:

1. Either being exists, or non-being exists, or both being and non-being exist.
2. Either there is being, or there is non-being, or there is both being and non-being.
3. Either existence exists, or non-existence, or both existence and non-existence.
4. Either there is existence, or there is non-existence, or there is both existence and non-existence.
5. Either it is being, or it is non-being, or it is both being and non-being.
6. Either it is existence, or it is non-existence, or it is both existence and non-existence.

Here "existence" has been listed as a translation of the participle. This translation is not taken very seriously. "Being" seems to be a more natural translation of the participle. As well, this translation will fall in with the traditional readings of Melissus, Parmenides, and Plato's Parmenides. To translate the participle as "existence"[1] would require some strong reasons which are not to be found in Gorgias's work.

From this point we are in a position to conclude that we need to consider options three, four and six no further. We are, then, only to consider options one, two and five. In order to decide which of these three is best, we should keep in mind that since we have decided that Gorgias's task is the more radical, our translations must be kept in accord with this conclusion. Because of this position, option five is rejected as it is in the less radical project. We now have left only options one and two. Once again we

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[1]The use and contrast Gorgias offers between the infinitive and participle seems very well captured by the contrast (in English) between "being" and "existence". Gorgias's arguments will later depend on this contrast. The argument seems quite sophisticated, but unfortunately does not seem to have been appreciated by scholars.

choose the more elegant rendering of the Greek. Thus we opt for alternative one.

> 66) So he argues in the following way that nothing exists. For if something exists, either being exists, or non-being exists or both being and non-being exist. But neither does being exist as he will show, nor non-being as he will explain, nor both being and non-being as even this he will demonstrate. Therefore there is not anything.

At this juncture it is appropriate to explain why "non-being" has been chosen over "not-being" as a translation of to mē on.[1] The use of "not" in the context of Gorgias's argument seems to be associated with a verb. Thus this would give the participle more verbal force. However, "non" seems to have a more substantive force.. The latter seems more desirable here because Gorgias, in investigating whether or not there is something, seems to be more concerned with the discovery of a product rather than a process. Gorgias is investigating whether something exists, not whether something is happening.

Secondly, a contrast between saying "not-being" and "non-being" might be drawn in the following way. When we say "non" we attempt to introduce a new or different category. When, however, we say "not" we are not introducing another category but only denying one that has been hypothesized. Consider: "He is not hungry" and "he is a non-hungry type of person". If this is the case, and since we agree that Gorgias is offering alternatives, then to say "not-being" would not be to offer another alternative but only to deny

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[1] It should be pointed out that many think that "not-being" is an adequate translation of to mē on. See for instance Loveday and Forester's translation of PA.

one. To say "non-being" would be to offer a second alternative.[1] Thus Gorgias is to be translated by the words "non-being".

The last justification is that the generic mē seems better brought out with "non" than "not".

At the end of paragraph sixty-six we diverge from our own established manner of translating. Ouk ara esti ti has been translated as "Therefore there is not anything" over "Therefore something does not exist". By translating ti as "anything" and using the less elegant reading, the full force of the claim that there is not anything at all comes forward in a much clearer manner.

> 67) Now non-being does not exist. For if non-being exists, something at the same time will and will not exist. For insofar as it ((non-being)) is thought of as non-being, it will not exist. But, insofar as it ((non-being)) is non-being, then contrariwise it will exist. But it is altogether absurd that something at the same moment is existing and not existing. Therefore non-being does not exist. And in another way, if non-being exists, then being will not exist. For these are opposite to each other. And if existence applies to non-being, non-existence is applied to being. Certainly it is not the case that being does not exist, nor will non-being exist.

The first problem with the above translation is the subject in the first part of the argument. We have filled in "non-being" --found in double parentheses. That "non-being" is the subject of the sentence is made clear from the preceding sentence in which non-being is revealed as the subject of the discussion.

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[1] That we should hold that Gorgias is trying to offer alternatives ought to be fairly apparent just by the argument itself. As well, Gorgias, to the extent of subject matter, is working out of a Parmenidean framework and because Parmenides sees each of the alternatives as a different route, it becomes clear to to mē on is thought to be a different alternative and not just the denial of an alternative.

The next problem is a very important one. We will begin with the Greek. ē men gar ouk on noeitai, ouk estai, ē de esti mē on, palin estai. This we have translated as follows: "For insofar as it ((non-being)) is thought of as non-being, it will not exist. But insofar as it ((non-being)) is non-being, then contrariwise it will exist." Here, on and mē on are translated as predicates.[1] By their use Gorgias reveals what it is that he picked out with to on and to mē on. We take it that the article for the predicates is thought to be obvious and unnecessary in light of the numerous mentions of both to on and to me on. We have here a case of a predicate adjective in which the predicate does not require an article (see 956 of Goodwin's Grammar). A parallel situation might be when talking about a gift and then saying esti kalon. Here I would take it that the point would be that it is a fine thing. This possibility, in conjunction with the previously mentioned point that to on and to mē on are the subject of our discussion leads one to conclude that our translation is quite likely correct. Indeed, there is a precedent for translating Gorgias in this fashion. Loveday and Forester translate to te gar mē on esti mē on kai to on on[2] as "For Not-being is Not-being and Being is Being."[3] It would seem, then, that our translation

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[1]It must be pointed out that the use of on without an article is that of a participle. "Being" is also a participle although "a" or "the" "being" is not.

[2]The Greek text can be found in Diels's "Ad Aristotelis qui fertur de Melisso Xenophane Gorgias libellus".

[3]Found in Loveday's and Foresters' translation of "De Melisso Xenophane Gorgias" in Volume VI of The Works of Aristotle translated into English.

cannot be too far wrong.

It has, nevertheless, been argued that since the participles lack articles, the participles must be read as adjectives. The above reading is said to ignore this point. For the reasons given above as well as reasons regarding cogency of argument I reject this conclusion. Yet one cannot rule out the point. Thus it is appropriate to record a translation of this passage which is in line with this suggestion. That translation is "For insofar as it ((non-being)) is non-existent, it will not exist. But insofar as it ((non-being)) is non-existent, then contrariwise it will exist." Since we admit that this is a serious contender for translation of the Greek, we must also analyze the argument on this interpretation.

In sixty-seven, we must be aware of the force of kai allōs. Its use is not to continue an old argument but to start another one. This makes it clear that there are two arguments given here and not just two parts of an argument.

In the above argument we have the first introduction of the articular infinitive of the verb "to be", to einai. Throughout the argument Gorgias seems to keep this distinct from the articular participle, to on. The participle seems to be the subject of discourse and the infinitive seems to be used to suggest something about that subject. The articular infinitive is used to reveal some characteristics of what we mention by uttering the words to on. The contrast, then, seems to be between being and its property of existence. This contrast makes the argument is of great interest to us.

Instead of saying "if existence applies to non-being" and "non-existence is applied to being" we might say "if existence is a property of non-being" and "non-existence is a property of being". Such an alteration in translation would be perfectly correct with regard to the Greek. We do not choose to do this since were we to translate Gorgias thus, then we would have committed Gorgias to the error of holding existence to be a property. Our method of examination holds that we do not commit a philosopher to [illegible] or unless necessary, we give him the best interpretation possible. Hence we translate as we have.

In the above, the contrast between noein and einai should be observed. These are seen here as two routes and they do not lead to the same conclusion as they do in Parmenides. Gorgias's argument draws a distinction that Paremenides did not observe.

> 68) Indeed, neither does being exist. For if being exists, either it is everlasting or created or at the same time everlasting and created. But neither is it everlasting nor created nor both as we will show. Therefore, being does not exist. For if being is everlasting (for one must begin here) it does not have any beginning.

Only one point needs to be registered regarding the above argument. The parenthetical remark seems slightly unusual but is no more than a pun on starting the argument and the subject under discussion having a beginning. This is one of the few places in this work where a play on words is very obvious. This is very different from Gorgias's other works which are full of such plays.

> 69) For everything created has a certain beginning. But the everlasting rendered as uncreated does not have a beginning. But not having a beginning it is boundless. But if it is boundless, then it is nowhere. For if it is somewhere, container

> is different from that ((being)) and so being, being surrounded by something ((place)), will no longer be boundless. For the surrounder is larger than the surrounded. But nothing is larger than the unbounded. Therefore the unbounded is not in anyplace.

The first things that need explanation are the additions in double parentheses. These are not found in the text, but have been added here for the sake of clarity. The first addition is "being". The argument is an argument against the existence of being. The subject under discussion is being. So the situation imagined is that being is somewhere. In this case, it is discovered that the container is different from it, that is, from being. Thus our addition seems appropriate. The second addition to the text is "place". In paragraph seventy Gorgias claims that the container is place. Here we are imagining a surrounder of being. Thus the surrounder or container is place. This addition is for the sake of clarity.

In the above passage to en ō has been translated by the word "container". In the next passage to en autō will be translated by the word "contained". These are not the most literal translations. "That-in-which" and "that-which-is-in" are much more literal, but also are much more cumbersome and difficult to deal with. Thus we choose the less literal because the meanings are obvious. Both, however, remain satisfactory.

> 70) Nor is it surrounded in itself. For then container and the contained will be the same. Being will become two, both place and body. For the container is place, but the contained is body. This is absurd. Thus being is not both container and contained.. Therefore if being is everlasting, it is unbounded. But if it is unbounded, it is nowhere. But if it is nowhere, it does not exist. So if being is everlasting, it is not being to begin with.

The two periods found in Diels' text following the word "contained" indicate a lacuna in the text. Thus it seems quite possible

that we are missing part of the argument. Nevertheless, we will see that we can make sense out of the argument as we have it.

Gorgias's second noteworthy pun is found in this section. After arguing that being would need be two, both place and body, he calls the view atopos, absurd. Quite literally the word means "without a place". This is a pun because part of the argument is that being, on this hypothesis, is nowhere (vide: sixty-nine).

One of the passages which is most problematic for translation is the tēn archēn found at the end of this passage. A number of alternatives have been considered: "it is not being with respect to a beginning", "it is not even being so that being begins", the above translation and even leaving out the phrase altogether. Ignoring the phrase, though making the whole problem much simpler, seems to have no justification whatsoever. Sextus has included it and we have no right to disregard it simply because it poses a problem. Translating it as "with respect to a beginning" will not do at all for this would indicate that the everlasting being has a beginning. However, having everlasting being with a beginning undercuts the distinction between the everlasting and the created that has been upheld throughout the whole of the argument. One might borrow the accusative of result from Smyth's Greek Grammar and read the phrase as a result clause. This alternative is very attractive as far as meaning goes. For having dealt with being as everlasting and finding this not possible, the result clause forces us to consider the other case, that of being having a beginning. This view of Gorgias has to be rejected because of the questionable

nature of such a construction and because there is no precedence in Greek for having an accusative of result with the verb einai.[1] The translation we have chosen encounters none of the above problems, nor any others. Our translation adds emphasis to the points that Gorgias has already made.

> 71) Now, being is not able to be created. For if it has been created, it has been created out of being or non-being. But it is not created out of being; for if it is being, then it is not created but already exists. Nor is it created out of non-being; for non-being is not able to create something because of the fact that the creator of something ought from necessity to share of existence. Therefore being is not even created.

In this translation, genēton has been translated as "created". One might choose to translate this word as "generated". It does not seem to be very important which of these is chosen so long as the translation is consistent.

"For if it is being" has been chosen over "for if it is existing" for ei gar on estin. Here we remain consistent with similar work in paragraph sixty-seven. Our translation puts the participle to better use than simply being superfluous. As well, our translation gives the participle a more univocal use--there is no need to search out equivocation as this problem arises enough on its own. The shortcoming of our translation is that the participle does not have an article; nevertheless one is in a position to understand it in the way we have.[2]

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[1] Both these points were brought to my attention by Dr. May.

[2] Considerations of this type of point were raised in sixty-seven. For a more thorough examination see the explanation of the translation given there and consider the argument being given.

72) Now according to the same considerations it is not both at the same time created and everlasting. For these attributes are destructive of each other. So if being is everlasting, it has not been created, and if created, it is not everlasting. Therefore if being is neither everlasting nor created nor both, then being would not exist.

In the opening line of paragraph seventy-two the subject of the verb has not been given. However, it is very easy to conclude that the subject is "being". Gorgias has set himself three areas of discussion: being, non-being, being and non-being. In the previous argument, Gorgias made it clear that he was beginning to analyze being. As yet there has been no indication of a change of subject. As well, in a few lines, Gorgias makes it clear that to on is his subject, when he says ouk ara esti to on. Thus there is no danger in concluding that being is the subject.

73) Again, if being exists, it is either one or many. But it is neither one nor many as will be proved. Thus being does not exist. For if it is one, it is either a certain quantity or continuous or a magnitude or it is body. But whatever of these it may be, it is not one. For whichever is posited as a quantity is divided. Being continuous it will be cut up. Similarly, being considered as a magnitude it will not be undivided. If being is a body, it will be three-fold, for it has both height and breadth and depth. But to say that being is none of these is absurd. So being is not one.

Adiareton can mean either "undivided" or "indivisible". "Undivided" is chosen because Gorgias does not seem to be arguing that everything that we say is one is potentially divisible, but rather that there is not such a thing as a one and everything that might be held to be one is, in fact, not one.

74) Nor is it many; for if it is not one, then it is not many. For the many is a synthesis of ones. Wherefore when the one is destroyed, so also is the many. But that neither being nor non-being exists is manifest from this.

All that needs to be noted of this argument is that we need

bring no modern notions into what is meant by synthesis. The idea is of a putting together of ones, a sum total.

> 75) But that both do not exist, both being and non-being is easily inferred. For if non-being exists and being exists, then non-being will be the same as being with respect to existence. And because of this neither one of them exists. For that non-being does not exist is agreed. But we argue by positing being the same as non-being. And so it ((being)) will not exist.

In the last line "being" has been filled in here for the sake of clarity. The only other expression that might be filled in is "being and non-being". It is apparent that this is not the case both because it has already been shown in the argument that non-being does not exist and because the pronoun is in the singular, auto, rather than the plural, auta.

Concerning this passage we should also note that once again the infinitive einai is being used. Here the use it has is to give existential status to the subject under discussion.

> 76) It is certain then that if being is the same as non-being, it is not possible for both to exist. For if both exist, they are not the same thing, but if they are the same thing, both do not exist. From which it follows that there is nothing. For if neither being, nor non-being, nor both exist and beyond this nothing is conceived, then there is nothing.

At this point we are finished with the first section of Gorgias's arguments. We now move into the second and begin with a problem of how to deal with the neuter plural participle. It is a problem of great importance and likely of great debate.

> 77) One must similarly undertake to show that even if something should exist, it would be unknownable and inconceivable to a man. Gorgias says: "For if things thought (about) are not beings, then being is not thought (about)". And he says this according to the following argument: If it happens to things thought (about) that they are white, then it happens to white things to be thought (about). In the same way he argues that if it happens

to things thought (about) that they are not beings, then according to necessity, it will happen to beings that they are not thought (about).

In this passage we have a number of comments that ought to be made including some remarks on the neuter plural participle. Remarks on other subjects will be made first.

Seventy-seven contains what appears to be a quotation from Gorgias. Another is found in seventy-eight, but these two appear to be the only direct quotations of Gorgias. The rest of the work is a statement of (as opposed to a recording of) Gorgias's work.

Here the verb phroneō can either mean to think something or to think about something. Thus it is not always clear whether Gorgias intends to refer to the objects thought about or the thought itself. Our parenthetical "about" is used to keep the reader cognizant of this problem.

Let us now consider the issue of the translation of onta. What Gorgias means by it and the difference between it and to on I do not want to consider extensively here. That problem is of a more philosophical nature and wherein the two differ or are related will be left until we consider the work as a philosophic thesis.[1] Only then will we have sufficient means for deciding between them. Here the reason why "beings" has been chosen as a translation for onta over "in existence" is the only issue to be taken up.[2] Were the Greek ta onta our problem disappears. In this case it would be

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[1]Discussions of the differences are found in chapter two and three.

[2]An issue parallel to this we have considered already in our explanation of the translation for sixty-seven.

quite clear that the use of the participle would be as a plural subject. Because the verb with onta is esti we can understand onta to be read either as an adjective or as a noun - a parallel set of examples would be "Socrates is honorable" and "Socrates is an honorable man". If we take the adjectival reading, the translation would be "in existent". The problems with this reading are that the word onta becomes slightly superfluous; this is unlikely. That is adding "in existent" adds nothing. It is not even likely that the word onta is emphatic. For given that it is ouk esti one would expect emphasis, not by means of introducing the word onta, but by means of emphasizing the negation with something like oudamothen. Against this the adjectival reading does have the advantage of making the point somewhat simpler. This simplicity, however, has the corresponding disadvantage of destroying the contrast between the use of the infinitive and that of the participle. Since translating the participle as a noun is legitimate--again, (956) of Goodwin's Grammar as well as the other reasons offered in our work on sixty-seven--and does not create the problems of redundancy and does preserve a univocal use of language (as well as a very insightful distinction on Gorgias's part), the plural participle has been translated as "beings". Nevertheless, it must be recognized that this translation is somewhat problematic. Thus we must offer an alternative translation as we did in sixty-seven. Once more, it is not the case that we feel this to be the correct translation, but rather, since our translation has been seriously criticized in favor of another way of reading Gorgias, in fairness, we must offer this other alternative. There are two areas in sixty-seven where

the difficulty arises. They become: "if things thought are in existence" and "to things thought that they are not in existence". The former of these two translations arises again in seventy-eight.

Having settled upon the translation of the words onta and ta onta let us consider on a very superficial level what the contrast between to on and ta onta is. Very clearly we will need to say much more about this later, but it is hoped that some things will be said now which will aid our understanding later.

An example for understanding the thesis might be like the contrast between tree and trees. We move from one individual to a number of individuals. Can we say that Gorgias is moving from one individual to a number of individuals? In the sections that are about to be translated it does seem to be the case that Gorgias by talking about beings is referring to a number of individuals; for he talks about the possibility of different things that are thought existing. He uses the examples of chariots on the sea, he talks of white things and so forth. These seem to be various onta. If that is the case, then it would seem that each one would be an on, or at least an on is an individual.

Is this what Gorgias is really doing? One might want to object that if this is what he and more generally those of the Eleatic tradition mean by to on, then their doctrine would simply be outrageous. A counter argument and an effective one would be to point out all the dendra about--each one a dendron. This would result in a very short career for monism and its variations.

Before we become too carried away with this as either a

criticism or an argument against reading the participles on and onta in what should be their natural way, it may be worth considering the philosophic project of monists and their offshoots, such as Gorgias. Let us, however, stay with Gorgias since he is our major concern and since the point seems to be clearer in his case. Gorgias's attempt is to show us that there is nothing at all. To point out to him that there is a collection of trees will not startle him. He would conclude that they must be some sort of hallucination or delusion, or he would just give one of his arguments again. To point out that there is a group of trees, then is quite irrelevant for him. Gorgias's arguments show why there cannot be that or anything else. Since Gorgias is in mid-argument proving that there is nothing at all, saying that, pointing out that there is what he is questioning and proving impossible, is not an effective rebuttal.

The anticipated objection to this project of contrasting on and onta does not work; for the contrast seems to hold, though later we will alter the interpretation such that it is no longer like tree and trees but rather like hair and hairs. Our objection was perhaps a very common sense approach, but it is not effective because it is the common sense approach that is what is being questioned.

Let us return to our original problem, the contrast between on and onta. On the one hand we take Gorgias by the word onta to be referring to various individuals. What one would be referring to when there is only on is more perspicuous with a monist like Parmenides. Because Parmenides holds only on we should not suspect it to be like a tree. Rather it is the thing that is, well-rounded

and so forth.[1] What to on is, is the product of some very special philosophizing and not the product of looking out one's window to see what is out there.

> 78) Therefore this inference is sound and logical: "If things thought (about) are not beings, being is not thought (about). But the things thought (about) (for this needs to be considered) are not beings, as we will prove. Therefore, being is not thought (about). Now it is evident that the things thought (about) are not beings.

This passage contains the second (and last) direct quotation. In fact, this is not a different quotation but a repetition of the one we found in seventy-seven.

The accusative tēn akoluthian has not been translated. The force it has is to make clear that the argument follows. It has not been translated because the inclusion of it would make the reading too awkward, yet the exclusion of it does not cause a loss of meaning, for the meaning is carried by hugies and sōdson.

> 79) For if the things thought (about) are beings, then all the things thought (about) exist and in whichever way someone should think them. This is unlikely. But if it is, it is trivial. For should someone think of a man flying or a chariot running on the sea, there is not therefore a man flying or a chariot running on the sea. Therefore, things thought (about) are not beings.

There seem to be two areas of concern in seventy-nine. It is not immediately apparent that our translation is correct because of the passage following and including oude gar phronē tis . . . One is tempted to take the oude with the phrase that immediately follows. Because this phrase is in the subjunctive its negation would have to

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[1] It is from this that we get the notion that the contrast must be something like hair and hairs.

be by means of mēde. The oude is taken more appropriately with the phrase that follows the one just considered. This, then, is the grammatical justification for translating as above. As well, it should be pointed out that this reading makes for a more interesting philosophical puzzle. Gorgias, on this interpretation, is bringing up the issue of what to do with things that we imagine but that we know are not "out there".

The second issue in seventy-nine is what to do with the Greek ei de esti, phaulon. An editor, Becker, brackets the phrase indicating that he does not feel this passage should be included. Unfortunately, we do not know his reasons for the suggestion. Because of this, we are not in a position to know whether to accept or reject this suggestion. The only apparent reason for its rejection is that it can be construed such that it undercuts the argument, and, as such, the comment is unlikely. It seems, however, that the comment can be construed as not undercutting the argument. Because of this the remark will be left in and we will explain later the problem one might have with its meaning.

> 80) In addition to these arguments if things thought (about) are beings, non-beings will not be thought (about). For opposites occur with opposites, and non-being is the opposite of being. And because of this, in all ways, if being thought (about) applies with being, then not being thought (about) will be applied to non-being. However, this is absurd, for even Scylla and Chimera and many of the non-beings are thought (about). Therefore being is not thought (about).

What has been rendered as "occur with" could be rendered as "are attributes of"; hence Gorgias would be saying that opposites are attributes of opposites. Either translation seems quite acceptable, however since "attributes" has come to be a technical term in

philosophy, it is misleading to use the words "attributes" here. One would think that Gorgias was committed to a doctrine that he may be free from. Thus we translate using "occur with"; hence the translation remains neutral by not forcing a doctrine on Gorgias that he may not hold (although in our analysis we may find that he does hold this doctrine).

Similarly what has been rendered as "applies with" could be rendered as "is a property of". Again, although either translation is acceptable, it is appropriate to translate as we have, for the reason that the alternative translation has come to be, in philosophy, a technical term; hence its use would mislead the reader and commit Gorgias to a view that he need not be forced to hold.

> 81) Just as the things seen are said to be visible because of the fact that they are seen, so the things heard are said to be audible because of the fact that they are heard. And we do not throw out the seen because it is not heard nor do we dismiss the heard because it is not seen. For each one ought to be judged by the appropriate sense but not by another sense. Thus too the things thought (about) will exist((be thinkable)) even though they should not be looked at by the visual faculty, nor heard by the hearing, for the reason that they are grasped by the appropriate criterion.

The remark in double parentheses in eighty-one is an alternate reading to the view that things thought will exist. It is assumed on the alternative reading that the appropriate noun is deleted but is still obvious because of the context of the two previous examples in which "be audible" follows upon hearing and "visible" follows upon seeing. Either reading seems acceptable. Which is correct will only become apparent--if at all--when we examine the argument.

> 82) Therefore if someone thinks that chariots are running on the sea, even if he does not see them, he is oblidged to believe that

chariots are running on the sea. But this is absurd. Therefore being is not thought nor even apprehended.

There seems to be no important difficulties with this passage.

83) But if it were apprehended it could not be passed on to another. For if beings are visible and audible and commonly perceptible things which do indeed subsist outside the senses, then of these, the visible things are grasped by the sight and the audible things by the hearing and not crosswise. Then how is it possible for one to reveal these things to another?

In this passage we find the verb hupokeimai: it is also to be found in other passages following this one. This verb is found quite frequently in the philosophic discussions of the Greeks. In Plato's Cratylus (436d) it means assumed or laid down, assumed as ground of an argument. Aristotle in the Categories (5) uses the articular participle from the verb to mean subject. Chosen as a translation of this verb is a Latin word intended to capture the force of this word. This, besides being legitimate, has the advantage of not calling for an object. When there is the addition of the word ektos we also include the word "outside". In the context of the argument given here these two moves seem quite appropriate.

84) That by ((means of)) which we reveal is a logos. But the things subsisting outside, namely beings are not a logos. Therefore we do not reveal things to other people but a logos, which is other than the objects subsisting. Therefore as the visible thing would not become the audible thing and conversely, so since being subsists outside, then our logos could not arise ((become being)). But that which is not a logos would not be revealed to another.

In the first parenthetical remark, "means of" has been included in order to make clear what is meant. In doing so we make known that an instrumental dative is used. Such a point can be comprehended without our addition, but the point is made much more clearly with the addition. The second parenthetical remark is to offer what may

be deleted and is to be understood in the context of a similar remark, immediately before this, in which there was something filled in. Here, as in eighty-one, we will have to wait until we examine the argument in order to know which translation is correct.

Some objections might be raised against our translation of ta hupokeimena kai onta. For hupokeimai we no longer have the ektos and so use the simple meaning of subsisting. Because it is the participle with an article we get "things subsisting". We understand the article to have the range to cover the onta--in fact, some manuscripts give another article--and thus we keep our standard translation of "beings". The kai we understand to mean "namely". One might suspect that kai means "and".[1] However, it seems to be the case that Gorgias is going on to identify further what he is talking about rather than mentioning two categories of things. (Were it the latter we would not be prepared for the remark at all. We would be very puzzled about what he is doing).

> 85) Indeed a logos, he says, is composed of things falling upon us from without. That is, from things perceptable to the senses. From the meeting with a flavor there arises in us a logos which is expressive of that quality. And from the incidence of a color there arises in us a logos which is expressive of color. But if this is so, a logos is not indicative of something external, but rather the external becomes revealor of the logos.

In this, as well as the preceding paragraph there has been no attempt to translate the word logos. This is justified because logos is such an equivocal term and is used here in a number of different

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[1]Most translations take kai to mean "and" (vide: Bury's translation of Sextus Empericus, Vol. 2 in the Loeb Library Series).

ways. Hence choosing some one translation would not do the work justice. Moreover, of each isolated instance of the word, it is not clear which of a number of translations is correct.

> 86). Moreover it is not possible to say that logos subsists in the way that things visible and audible subsist so that things subsisting namely beings can be revealed from a thing itself subsisting namely a being. For if the logos also subsists, but is different from the rest of the things subsisting, then the visible bodies would be considerably different from the logos. For the visible is comprehended through one organ and the logos through another. Thus a logos could not point out the many external things, just as they do not make clear the nature of each other.

It is with a great deal of difficulty that the translation of the opening line is accepted. As it stands it is unclear whether the "so that" clause should be understood as being asserted and the clause before it denied or whether the "so that" clause is a consequence which would have followed on the identification of logos and things visible; this identification being denied and hence the consequence (the "so that" clause) is ruled out as well. Although our translation is open to these two interpretations, still it is the best available translation. Ruling out one of the interpretations will be the business of our commentary.

Chapter Two: Nothing Exists

In this the second chapter of the thesis an exegesis as well as an analysis of Gorgias's first set of arguments and their structure will be undertaken. Our concerns here are of a more philosophical nature than they were previously.

Since our major source of information is SE we will comment primarily upon his arguments. Comments on the information given to us by PA will be made only after we have considered the work of SE or when PA gives us information other than that found in SE.

It would seem appropriate to give some help to the reader in how to mose usefully read this and the following chapters. Because a step by step commentary on both what the argument is and how good it is is performed, this chapter cannot be successfully read in isolation. One must read it in conjunction with re-reading Gorgias's arguments. Because of the complexity of the arguments and subsequently of the analysis, the reader can easily lose track of the argument. This creates the need for re-reading certain sections of the analysis to pick up the point.[1]

Let us begin our examination of Gorgias by considering Sextus's opening remarks. In paragraph sixty-five SE begins by making some general remarks about Gorgias that helps make evident

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[1]This is especially true of the arguments in Chapter Three.

the context in which to see him. Our attention to this will help to create a correct understanding of the arguments of Gorgias. Nevertheless, in examining the context offered by Sextus we must be prepared to question whether Sextus correctly understood what he was recording and to what purposes he was recording the arguments. We will not just accept SE remarks uncritically.

The first thing to note in sixty-five is the reference to a criterion and the claim that Gorgias was a destroyer of it. In Outlines of Pyrrohonism SE offers a history of the views put forth by the sceptics of his own, as well as his predecessors era. In "Against the Logicians" Sextus considers the issue of whether we have a criterion of truth. Having such a standard would presumably allow one to judge on a given matter whether a claim is true or false. Sextus feels that there is no such criterion and records arguments (for example, those of Gorgias and Protagoras) "he takes" to be against the criterion view.

Protagoras is offered as abolishing the criterion of truth because according to SE:

> he asserts that all sense impressions and opinions are true and that truth is a relative thing inasmuch as everything has appeared to someone or been opined by someone is at once real in relation to him.[1]

Gorgias is offered as one who, like Protagoras, rejects a criterion for truth. If this view of Gorgias is correct, then we can examine

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[1]Sextus Empericus, Outlines of Pyrrohonism, translated by R. G. Bury, volume one, paragraph sixty, The Loeb Classical Library.

his arguments realizing what their aim is, seeing whether or not they are successful at reaching his conclusion. Of course, we do not expect him to argue to the same conclusion in the same way as Protagoras and the Protagoreans; nevertheless, we should expect him, according to Sextus, to argue to the same conclusions.

Sextus, having told us Gorgias's position and having suggested that Gorgias's method is not that of Protagoras, continues in order to explain to us Gorgias's way of reaching the sought after conclusion.

But before we examine Gorgias's method let us express some reservations about SE's attempt to fit many of the Greek philosophers into the role of those who would wish to abolish the (a) criterion of truth. SE's comments make it appear that these philosophers are arguing to destroy the "criterion". But when Protagoras argues that man is the measure, does he do so in order to conclude that there is no criterion of truth? There seems to be little evidence that this was the sought conclusion of the argument. Protagoras might have endorsed that conclusion but nevertheless it is surely not the end of his argument. SE, however, sees the "criterion conclusion" as the goal of these philosophers. This conclusion is really SE's conclusion not theirs, or so it seems. Thus although we do not doubt that Protagoras argued that man is the measure, we do not thereby accept Sextus's claim that it was to abolish the criterion. Such a claim requires further argument by SE.

Similarly, when SE tells us of the three central theses of Gorgias's work, we do not need to think that by these Gorgias hoped

to prove that there was no criterion. Here, as before, there seems to be no internal evidence for seeing Gorgias as supporting the criterion conclusion. It may follow from Gorgias's work that there is no criterion and, once again, Gorgias may have seen this to follow but the claim that the arguments were offered principally for that purpose (the abolition of a criterion) has no support.

These remarks then lead us to doubt that Gorgias intended his argument to show that there was no criterion. Further and quite important evidence for this can be seen in the PA text. Here there is not a hint of the need to talk about a criterion. Since there is no good evidence in the text of SE and PA for the claim that Gorgias talked of a criterion, it seems that the discussion of a criterion seems to be solely that of SE. Thus the discussion about a criterion is to be omitted in our work on Gorgias. We must rather put our energies in claims such as ouden estin.

SE, before telling us the conclusion of the work of Gorgias, gives us the title of the discourse (Concerning Non-being or On Nature). By seemingly identifying non-being and nature, physis, some idea is given to us of where Gorgias's work leads us to. This title is reminiscent of Parmenides and Melissus's concerns. Indeed the title parodies Melissus's On Being or On Nature. From these considerations it would seem that Gorgias shares some ground with the Eleatics, although it would also seem, by his title and SE's offering of him as a sceptic, that Gorgias takes a view contrary to and critical of the Eleatics. We can see that although Gorgias is critical of and contrary to the Eleatics, he nevertheless works

within the Eleatic framework. Gorgias does not reject their way of talking about things (being, non-being, being and non-being, the one/many argument, and so on); rather he talks in their fashion but to very different conclusions.

That philosophers after Parmenides want to work within the Parmenidean framework, even without Parmenides conclusions, is not very surprising given the impressiveness of Parmenides style of arguing. It is a style that is surprisingly far-reaching in consequence.[1]

The three conclusions credited to Gorgias by Sextus are: (1) that there is nothing, (2) that were there something we would not be able to (intellectually) grasp it, and (3) but were we so able we could not say it. The contrast between Gorgias's second and third conclusion is in need of some elucidation. Let us use an analogy that might help us to understand the differences between the three points that Gorgias makes. Suppose there is speculation about an object that is reported to be on the horizon; Gorgias, in his first point, would say that there is no such object. In his second point, he would claim that even were there such an object we could not know that it was there. Lastly, he would hold that even if it were there and someone knew that something was there he could still not bring forth what was there nor say anything about it.[2]

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[1]For example the claim, in an as yet unpublished paper by Richard Bosley, that in the ways of Parmenides is contained the liar's paradox and the ontological argument.

[2]We will let this analogy do for the moment although when we come to examine the second and third sections we will see that Gorgias

By means of these three points one can see clearly that Gorgias is a sceptic. Again, the claim that he would thereby want to demolish the criterion of truth seems unnecessary. If anything, Gorgias's position would make a criterion for truth somewhat superfluous.

From what SE says, we can view Gorgias as a sceptic who has commerce with the Eleatics. We see him holding a radical nihilistic view that is at odds with the Eleatics. His role as a destroyer of the criterion for truth does not seem apparent in the intent of the work. Unless we discover anything that would lead to that conclusion, we reject SE's claim.

PA in his introductory remarks[1] gives us additional information in respect to Gorgias's work. In preparation for Gorgias's arguments, PA tells us something about the origin of the arguments and what Gorgias is doing with them. In so doing PA mentions both Melissus and Zeno as Gorgias's predecessors. This then serves to confirm speculation that Gorgias is involved with the Eleatics. Thus when we begin to look at Gorgias's arguments we should always be watching for connections with the Eleatics.

PA comments that Gorgias's methodology is one of taking and combining the opposing results of his predecessors. Gorgias argues on philosophical puzzles typical of the day--the one/many problem,

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may be concerned with whether we can speak or think about anything at all.

[1] See 979a14-23.

the created/uncreated issue--suggesting that if there is something, it must be one of these; that is, it must be either one or many, or created or uncreated. Having established that, Gorgias takes his various predecessors denial of each and then concludes that there must be nothing. Gorgias, from one of the sides in the controversies, takes arguments supporting the denial of the one and from the other camp he takes the arguments denying the many. In this way Gorgias concludes that since it is neither one nor many, nor created nor uncreated, it does not exist. Keeping in mind the argument is a reductio ad absurdum the argument could be schematically represented as follows.

Argument one

1. either Something or Nothing exists.
2. but given Something, then it is one or many.
3. but, it is neither one nor many.
4. therefore the hypothesis of something is incorrect.
5. Thus there is Nothing.

Argument two

1. either Something or Nothing exists.
2. but given Something, then it is created or uncreated.
3. but, it is neither created or uncreated.
4. Therefore the hypothesis of something is incorrect.
5. Thus there is Nothing.

PA makes a comment of which we need to be especially cognizant. He says "thus he shows according to a primary method typical of himself". The method of the reductio ad absurdum by employing both parties arguments in a dispute is seen by PA to be an original contribution by Gorgias to the methods of arguing. This is a point that requires emphasis because, from this alone, we can begin to see Gorgias as an innovative contributor to philosophic methodology and

not "just another sophist". Gorgias's taking of arguments by various philosophers (especially the Eleatics) to the disadvantage of all deserves our attention because it would seem that since Gorgias attempts to take the Eleatic approach to its logical absurdity, it forces us to reconsider the whole Eleatic tradition. One is fascinated and intrigued by the work of Parmenides and Zeno as well as that of Melissus, but when we see how Gorgias takes their method of arguing and extends its application such that nihilism results we become tempted to conclude (though Gorgias would not be) that the method of the Eleatic philosophers must be faulty. Thus Gorgias forces us to abandon that way of doing philosophy; that is to say, a methodology that forces conclusions that are quite obviously corrupt must itself be a corrupt methodology.

We are now in a position to take up the argument in paragraph sixty-six. Clearly Gorgias will now take up the first point that nothing exists. In the previous chapter, we learned that Gorgias's method for the argument was the reductio. There it was also explained that the argument that Gorgias was engaged upon was unique insofar as the unacceptable consequence that comes from the interlocutor's premises is not only unacceptable itself but is also Gorgias's own conclusion.

At paragraph sixty-six Gorgias begins his argument for the first of the three points (that nothing exists) by offering this conclusion and giving an overview of how the argument is to work. To begin the reductio, Gorgias furnishes us with the interlocutor's position, namely that something exists. But in providing this,

Gorgias puts in a condition which suggests that if the interlocutor's position is held, then one of the three consequences put forward must follow. These consequences are that either being exists, or non-being exists, or both being and non-being exist.

PA's understanding of the format of Gorgias's argument is different, or at least has a different emphasis. Whereas SE sees the argument being that if something, then either being, or non-being or being and non-being. And, if being, then one or many, created or everlasting. PA sees the argument as if something, then one or many, created or uncreated. The intermediate stage of hypothesizing being etcetera is, if not totally ignored, considerably de-emphasized. As such on PA's view of the argument, there is a much less obvious connection between Gorgias and Parmenides and Melissus' work on being, non-being, being and non-being. On this view, Gorgias looks less like a member of the Eleatic tradition.

If it is appropriate to hazard a guess on which is more accurate, then it could be suggested that since PA's version is considerably later than SE it is likely that the intermediate stage regarding being has dropped out. Thus SE's account is thought to be more in the spirit of Gorgias.

1) Something/Nothing

Upon the hypothesis of something existing Gorgias, according to SE, has offered the three options mentioned above. When Gorgias shows that none of these are appropriate it is clear that the assumption that something exists must be abandoned. Gorgias then concludes that nothing exists. It is that last part of the argument

that will be considered now.

What is the force of saying that there is nothing for Gorgias? In the reductio style of arguing, we see that one of Gorgias's ploys is to offer alternatives; for example, the three routes (hodoi) of Parmenides, the consequences of something existing, being being one or many and so on. Because of this, one is tempted to see the something/nothing contrast as a contrast of routes.[1] The point that Gorgias would hold is that the abandonment of the one path, because of its lack of applicability to the situation described, necessitates the adoption of the other path. The adoption of this path would be analogous to coming to a fork in the road; one rejects the path on the left, for the path on the right because it is inadequate for one's purposes. Similarly, one might read Gorgias as rejecting the route of something and taking the route of nothing. Here, then, it is held that nothing is a route, and is a route that one can take.

The difficulty with this is that, in fact, nothing is not a route at all. Thus if the path analogy is what Gorgias is doing, then we see an area where we need to say that he is philosophising in an incorrect way.

This leaves us with two questions: (1) Why is nothing not a route?, (2) Does Gorgias hold it to be a route?. Let us discuss the

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[1] Here we take up on Parmenides's somewhat metaphoric vocabulary. Nothing particularly technical is meant. By "paths" or "routes" we only attempt to point out options or alternatives that are exclusive of each other and (cumulatively) exhaustive.

questions in the above order.

Let us suppose that I am emptying out my pockets. First I pull out a quarter. I stick my hand in again and comment that I think there is still something in my pocket. Indeed there is, and I now pull out a nickel. I now tell you that there is nothing in my pocket. When I do this do I tell you what is in my pockets? No! You do not now expect me to pull out nothing from my pockets. Rather you now know that there is not anything else in my pockets. If I did still pull something from my pockets you would not think that that must be the nothing, rather you would think I was wrong in holding that there was nothing in my pockets. Your claim would not be "so that is the nothing" but "Aha! so you were mistaken, there still was something in your pockets".

So we see that in saying "nothing" we do not say what there is or that there is something. However, when we say that there is something, although we do not make it clear what there is, we do take ourselves to be making it clear that there is something. Thus we can easily see that when I say "something" I offer a route that can be explored further. When however I say "nothing" I do not offer a route that can be further explored but I reject the view that there is a route of something.

Now let us go to our second question of whether Gorgias makes the mistake of thinking that nothing is a route, that is thinking that nothing is some sort of thing. It does not seem that there is decisive evidence either way. The major arguments in favor of holding him to this error are that Gorgias has a propensity

for offering alternatives and nothing and something are contrasted. The argument against holding Gorgias to such an error is that there is not a characterization of the route of nothing, say as found in Parmenides where there is a characterization of the route of being and non-being, thus we are not forced by such a characterization to say that Gorgias definitely, or likely, treats nothing as a path.

As well, in sixty-six where the outline of the argument is given, Gorgias concludes by saying that there is not anything. He takes that to be sufficient for his purposes. Now given that he opens sixty-six by saying that the argument shows that nothing exists and observing that he concludes by denying that there is anything, it seems quite likely that Gorgias does not mean to offer a doctrine of nothing as a path that one can take. Gorgias seems to take the force of saying that nothing exists to be the denial of there being anything rather than the assertion of some sort of thing, namely, nothing. This point, in conjunction with the lack of a characterization of nothing and with the principle of interpretation that gives the author the benefit of the doubt where reasonably available, leads one to conclude that it is likely that Gorgias does not mean to see nothing as a route that one takes, but rather as an exhaustion of the possibilities of there being something. We have warned against the error of thinking to the contrary and we still must keep in mind that Gorgias may have made such an error though our evidence is not strong enough to be sure that he has.

2) The Three Options

On the assumption that something exists Gorgias has offered three alternatives. He considers in turn the validity of each one's existence. Before we come to the specific questions of whether the arguments regarding each of the alternatives are appropriate, let us consider the three options themselves. Given that we are told that if something exists it must be either being or non-being or both, we must ask; do these three follow upon something? are there more? and so forth. This is to suggest that if someone told you that if there were a carrot, then it is either blue or green, you would be, then, in a position to inquire whether saying that the carrot must be green or blue is appropriate and to inquire if these alternatives are all there are and so on.

Rather than asking whether the options are exhaustive and similar questions, let us deal with some more fundamental questions about this issue. One question is: are the options offered options at all?

Prima facie it appears that Gorgias has offered three different alternatives, the same three found in some readings of Parmenides. One way to examine the appropriateness of Gorgias's alternatives (and therefore some readings of Parmenides alternatives) is by considering the words "not" and "non". Let us consider these words in isolation and then bring our findings back to Gorgias.

In the remarks on the translation (vide: chapter one) it was urged that "non" be chosen above "not" as a translation of me in to me on since the former sounds more like the offering of an option

than does the latter. This, however, must not be taken to mean that the use of "non" does give an option, but just that it seems more like offering an alternative than does the use of "not". We are now somewhat ahead of ourselves, for it is not yet clear why "not" is not seen as an offering an alternative.

Earlier it was argued that to say "nothing" was not to say what was in my pocket or that there was something in my pocket. The considerations here are similar. Suppose I say that there is a ticket in my pocket. In saying "ticket" I tell you what there is in my pocket. Now suppose I tell you that there is not a ticket in my pocket. In doing this I neither make clear what is in my pocket nor that there is something in my pocket. What I do accomplish, in the present context, is to deny that there is a ticket in my pocket, but I clearly do not say what there is or that there is something. Applying these considerations to Gorgias, we find that were one of his alternatives to be "not being", we would take it that in so saying Gorgias is not offering an alternative, but only denying the alternative of being. Thus when Gorgias feels that he has offered two routes, our analysis suggests that all that really has occurred is the offering of one route. The purported second route is not a new route but only a denial of the first route. Although "not being" is offered as if it is a route, in fact, to deny is not to say what the route is or to make clear that there is a route, but only to reject the first route. Thus on this reading Gorgias's philosophising

suffers the consequence of only offering one route.[1]

The above argument seems fairly clear; it does have an important consequence that needs to be made obvious. Consider the two following sentences: (1) esti to mē on (2) ouk esti to on. By our argument plus a translation of mē as "not", we recognize that although the intentions of the author may have been to distinguish the two; in fact, the force of the two is the same. (That the intention is different though the force the same lends support for translating as has been done by us, (1) as "it is non-being" and (2) as "it is not being". We then see the attempt at a distinction.)

Let us now consider the word "non". The ground work for this word has been done with the case of "this is not a ticket". Suppose Sherlock Holmes is looking for the murderer of Lady Evans. In explaining to Watson his methodology of narrowing things down, Holmes suggests that even the most elementary discoveries can be of great assistance. "For instance", he says, "even the knowledge whether the man is a caucasian or a non-caucasian can aid one a great deal in the discovery of the assailant". Our question with this example is what does Holmes achieve by saying "non-caucasian"? If one wanted to know of what race that man is one has the options of saying that he is either caucasian, negroid, mongolian and so forth. When

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[1] In the above argument it is clear to me that some and perhaps all the considerations on the force of the word "not" come from my association with Richard Bosley. The only thing in this argument that I can be confident that is my own work, is how this prevents Gorgias (and presumably Parmenides also) from offering routes at all.

Sherlock Holmes says that the man is non-caucasian he has not stated the race but only eliminated the caucasian race. Thus it would seem that our conclusions with "non" must be the same as they were with "not". Let us consider what may appear to be a more difficult case. Suppose that a man has a particularly narrow view on various matters. Having been raised in such a way that he sees little beyond his own social group, he suggests that there are two kinds of people, pinks and non-pinks. In dividing up things in this way does the man by "non-pinks", say what there is or that there is something, or is he, too, only denying something? It is still apparent that in saying "non-pink", one does not give the kind, but only eliminates something. "Non" is not the name of something added to pink, but only the elimination of that alternative. If the man says "non-pink", we are able to conclude that he means the yellow, red . . . people, but that is an implication that we draw. One still has not said what. That is only done by saying "white" or "red" and so forth.

The point that we made with "not" we also make with "non", that is, in saying "non-being" Gorgias, though thinking himself to be offering a second route, is only denying the route of being.[1]

The question of whether we should keep our distinction

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[1]It is interesting to note that Plato in his Sophist (257d) though making some progress or at least pointing out the problem with negation, still sees the issue to be what one is indicating rather than denying. There he says: ". . . we shall not agree, but admit no more than this - that the prefix 'not' indicates something different from the words that follow, or rather from the things designated by the words pronounced after this negative." (Translated by Cornford).

between "not" and "non" in the translation now arises. Since Gorgias does not achieve what he attempted with the distinction should we not drop it from the translation? It would seem to be appropriate to keep the distinction. Since it seems apparent that Gorgias was trying, by to mē on, to offer a different alternative and since "non" seems in the spirit of such an attempt, we gain insight into what has been attempted if we retain the distinction in the translation. Of course, we keep in mind that his attempt was not successful, but the lack of success seems no reason for excluding the attempt; furthermore the "not"/"non" distinction keeps the esti to mē on and ouk esti to on separate. We may argue that they do not differ in force but we do preserve the different structure and subsequently the attempt made by Gorgias.[1]

We now must face another question. Although by saying "non-being" Gorgias does not make the route he wishes to embark upon clear, are we in a position to make it clear? In the case of the narrow-minded person's division of people into pinks and non-pinks, we are in a position to discover what the route is, namely, the route of red, green, yellow people. Is such filling in available with "non-being"? Can we say what the route is?

The mē, being generic, leads one to believe that the thing(s) referred to form(s) a class of some sort. Unfortunately that is as

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[1]We could make the above distinction with a not/-not rather than not/non. For example "it is not-being" and "it is not being". However, the way we have drawn the distinction makes that distinction more obvious to the reader.

much as we can assume. In chapter one it was argued that we did not really understand what was meant by "being". We can be no clearer about what Gorgias means when he excludes being; thus we can say that Gorgias offers only one route. The second route is but an exclusion of the first and we are in no position to make clear what would be included in this. The third route also suffers because it is to be a combination of the first and the second routes. Since no second route can be offered, no third one can be suggested. To put this point in a different way; the third route suffers from the use of "non" in the way the second route does.

What we have done, then, has been to turn the issue into a shambles. The options that arise when something exists are not made clear and we can do nothing to illuminate the matter. It turns out that there is only one alternative offered and even that is not clearly understood. The arguments that follow the hypothesis of something become bogus; that is to say, that even were every argument against being, non-being and both being and non-being found to be correct, we still would not embrace Gorgias's conclusions. The latter two options (non-being, and being and non-being) are not really options and have been incorrectly treated as if they were. Thus the arguments argue about something that cannot be made sense of. From earlier considerations, we also find that we do not truly know what the first alternative is; thus it is not at all clear what the rejection of being or any of the alternatives amounts to.

3) The Force of "Being"

Although it is, by now, quite clear that the thesis proposed is not sensible, still there is one route that has not been adequately examined and so needs further consideration. That is the route of being. Dealing with being is no longer necessary from the point of view of overthrowing Gorgias's overall attempt--with the rejection of the other two alternatives, it is clear that the format is inadequate --but is examined purely out of interest in the discovery of what Gorgias might have been up to. In the first chapter the question of what being was was taken up; here we will develop our thoughts on this matter further. To some extent we will repeat ourselves. This repetition is deemed necessary; for previously it would not be appropriate to analyze the argument fully (while it was, nevertheless, necessary to say something about the subject).

Aristotle in his Physics ($184A_{15}$-$186A_3$) attempts to deal with the Monists who view being as one by trying to put the proponent in a dilemma about what they are saying is one. In so doing he hopes that the proponent of being will choose one clear route and then his work can be exposed. Like Aristotle we want to become clear about what Gorgias is arguing for but about the word "being". In our attempt to become clear about what he might mean by uttering the word "being", we will use more than one method of analysis. First we will examine "being" to see whether it falls in with a certain grouping of words. If it does not fall within a particular group, then we do not need to explore that possibility any further. If, however, "being" can be found to be a member of that particular group,

then we may have to ask ourselves further questions. Those questions will show whether "being" is: (1) a member of that group; (2) if Gorgias could have meant this; and finally, (3) does this make any sense.[1]

Before we begin this analysis let me remind you of the context within which we are working--Gorgias's hypothesis is "If something exists either being exists, or non-being exists, or both being and non-being exists".

We should start by limiting the field of investigation. There are many things one might do with words. We must discover what Gorgias is doing with "being". We begin by drawing a distinction between making clear or saying how we proceed and making clear or saying "when, "what", "why", "where" and "who". With the former we disclose acts or actions, for instance by "running" we disclose running. It is clear that by the use of the word "being" Gorgias does not wish to be talking about this sort of thing, running. The point seems obvious enough but we can strengthen our claim with an argument. Gorgias attributes place to being. Running, jumping, yelling and so forth cannot have place attributed to them though someone or something running, jumping or yelling can have place attributed to him. Thus it is clear that "being" unlike "running" or "jumping" is not used to say how we proceed.

Since we know that "being" is not to be placed with words

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[1]For the purposes of a linguistic analysis I have chosen to work within a framework of Richard Bosley. This framework has been gone into detail in an unpublished manuscript titled "Universals". Our purposes will not require the full subtlety of the framework; only a rough comprehension of the system is necessary and this will be made clear as we go along.

that make clear how we proceed, it must be that Gorgias by "being" wishes to make clear or to say "what", "who", "why", "when" or "where". But which of these is it? It is apparent that "being" is not used to say where. Gorgias talks about where being is and hence it cannot be the case that "being" also says where. Similarly we can conclude that "being" cannot be used to say "when". Gorgias considers when being came to be: hence "being" cannot itself make the "when" clear. Gorgias never offers "being" in order to explain why something happens or is the case, so it seems that by "being" Gorgias does not attempt to say "why". There is little evidence to suggest that "being" picks out "who". Thus we conclude that Gorgias must be meaning to say "what" when he talks about "being". Indeed Gorgias's original hypothesis is set out to find what there is. It is evident, then, that "being" is used to say "what". Having come this far, let us look at the ways we might use to say what.

We start this project with cases that are the least likely. Words such as "good" and "bad", "light" and "dark", "large" and "small". These we will call O-words.[1] Before we examine whether "being" can be placed amongst these words, we need to make it clear

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[1]At first glance what Zeno Vendler in Linguistics in Philosophy (pages 178-182) calls A2's appears to be what we call O-words. However, Vendler points out the similarity between A2's and some A3's. It would seem that our way of viewing the subject includes all A2's and the A3's that Vendler suggests are similar. Indeed if "pretty" and "ugly" are A1's, then O-words would include some A1's as well. It is not appropriate here to suggest that Vendler's criteria does not sufficiently distinguish some examples, rather let us be satisfied with the point that there are many ways to cut up a cake.

how this grouping of words is to be identified. Urmson in his book The Emotivist Theory of Ethics observed of "good" that it was scalene; that is, from good we derive the notions of better and best. Put in grammatical terms O-words are the positives from which the comparatives and superlatives are formed. So we from "good" get "better" and "best", from "large" we get "larger" and "largest". As well as being the positives from which comparisons are drawn, O-words are found in contrasting pairs: "good" for example, contrasts to "bad", "large" to "small". Furthermore, each of the words of the contrasting pair is a positive from which the comparatives and superlatives are derived. So as we have "larger" and "largest" derived from "large", so too we have a comparative and a superlative--in this case "smaller" and "smallest"--from the contrasting member of the pair, "small".

Having sufficient means for identifying O-words, we must make an observation concerning their use. If a fly were to look at a rock five meters in diameter, he might comment (if we were to allow flies to speak), that it looked rather large. The Giant in "Jack and the Beanstock" (who speaks quite well as children are too well aware) looking at the same rock would suggest that the rock is quite small. As observers of both these utterances, we feel no compulsion to suggest that one or the other is wrong. When we understand the context and participants of the discussion, both utterances--"this is large" and "this is small"--are quite acceptable.

A different point that can be made regarding the use of the O-words is that to assert, using the comparative, is not to assume the positive. If I suggest that it is getting darker out, I do not

necessarily believe, though I may, that it is dark out.

"Being" is not appropriately cast with O-words. "Being" does not have a contrasting partner unless we suggest "non-being". However, "non-being" does not seem analogous at all: the partner of "large" is not "non-large". Furthermore, "being" is not a positive that admits of comparatives. Lastly, participants and context do not seem the least bit relevant to whether one says of some thing that it is being. Thus "being" fails all the tests for O-words.

Although we can see that it is incorrect to think of "being" as an O-word such a view is not removed either from Greek philosophy in general or from Gorgias in particular. Gorgias in the latter half of sixty-seven and in eighty claims that being and non-being are opposite to each other. The argument regarding O-words shows us why we must hold that such a view is false, yet we must admit that, at least part of the time, Gorgias views being and non-being as if they were opposites.

Let us next characterize two groups of words together, U-words and A-expressions. U-words are words such as "color", "temperature", "height", and "address". A-expressions are words such as "red", "fifty-six degrees", "four feet" and "twenty-three Shady Drive".

Again, we must make clear how the groups of words, U-words and A-expressions, are to be identified. We might say that A-expressions are answers to U-words. Thus should I ask for the color of the table you could reply by using an A-expression such as "green"

or "blue" and so forth. We can identify U-words by means of a sentence frame in which these words would naturally be found. The sentence frame is "What is the _____ of x?" When one fills in the blank, one supplies a U-word, for instance, "color", "opinion" and so on. Just as filling in the blank generates the U-word so answering the question generates the A-expression. In answering the question "what is the color of the tree?", we might say "red" or "green". These are A-expressions. It is quite evident, but perhaps it is appropriate to state, that certain A-expressions "go with" certain U-words. "Red" and "56 degrees" are both A-expressions. However, only "red" goes with the U-word "color". We must find a different U-word for "56 degrees". In this case it is "temperature".[1]

We have now provided sufficient means for identifying these two groups of words. There remains a danger, however, that arises with the use of the sentence frames. If someone desired, they might put anything at all in the blank as an answer to the question. We must appeal to a sensitivity to the language when trying to fill in the blanks or answer the question. If that guide is followed, there will be no problem.

Let us now see how "being" fares as either a U-word or an

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[1]There are further divisions amongst U-words and A-expressions. For example "opinion" is a U-word but, unlike the U-words examined, an A-expression is not readily available. To generate the A-expression one has to offer one's opinion. This sophistication and others are not deemed necessary to this discussion and as such are not included here.

A-expression. We begin by seeing whether it is a U-word. It must be observed that "being" will not do in the sentence frame. In addition to this, even were we to force "being" in the sentence frame there are no A-expressions available, nor does it seem plausible that we could make any up. U-words, however, do have A-expressions available or coinable. Thus we conclude that "being" is not a U-word.

Although earlier it may have been evident that certain A-expressions go with certain U-words, what was not made evident is that A-expressions are expressions within a U-word system. For instance "red" is one A-expression of the U-word system "color". The U-word system must be present or able to be provided if one is to make any sense at all. Uttering the A-expression "red" would be meaningless unless we have the U-system color or some other U-system in mind. That is to say to say "this is red" is pointless unless we are aware that red is a color or what U-system, if not the U-system color, "red" is appropriate to.

With this position in mind, and if we are able to understand "being" as an A-expression, we would want to be able to determine the U-system in which it belongs. If we cannot discover an appropriate U-system, then saying that being exists becomes as empty as saying "this is a glurk" when we know that "glurk" is to be an A-expression but we do not know which U-system it is to be in.

Let us now consider the task of finding the appropriate U-word for which "being" is an A-expression. "Something" immediately offers itself. If this is so, we could read "if there is

something, being exists . . ." to be on par with "if there is a color, red exists . . .".[1]

Although we have, in the above, one means of understanding the use of the word "being" we still have a problem. "Something" is not a U-word. It does not fit the frames mentioned earlier; furthermore, U-words are uttered in order to indicate what are often called properties. When we use the word "something" what is under discussion is not restricted to properties. As well, when we utter a U-word we indicate what it is that we speak of, but when we utter "something" we do not indicate what we are speaking of at all. If I say "I have something in my pocket, we learn that there is something that is being talked about, but that is not to learn what is being talked about.

Of the hypothesis that "being" is an A-expression in the U-system something, we need to conclude that the above considerations must show either that Gorgias has set up a faulty system and thus his thesis is organized on an incoherent basis--this is a very attractive view for us--or that Gorgias's project cannot be this since this is in error.

Rather than now forcing the above dilemma on Gorgias, let us go on to examine whether there are more appropriate U-systems or

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[1]Clearly this last statement is rather odd. This should begin to move us to the conclusion that this is not, in fact, an adequately constructed U-word system. Hence the claim that "being" is an A-expression starts to look doubtful.

whether "being" functions in a role entirely different from that of an A-expression. We begin by continuing to look for appropriate U-systems.

If someone were to ask what red is, it would be appropriate to tell that person that it is a color. Here we have generated the appropriate U-word for the A-expression. If someone were to ask what being was, it would be quite difficult to come up with an answer. Being pressed, one might reply that it is what exists, or is an existent, or some other similar thing. In the above model, and taking "being" to be an A-expression, we would conclude that "being" is an A-expression under the U-word "what exists" or "an existent". This attempted solution to our problem has the difficulties we had when we tried to see "something" as a U-word. Neither "what exists" nor "an existent" fits the U-word sentence frames. Also, when we say "what exists" or "an existent" we do not indicate "properties" as we seem to with U-words. With "what exists" as the U-word we have the additional problem that "what exists" is a bona fide translation of the participle to on. This would lead to a very strange U-system in which "what exists" is, in effect, both the U-word and an A-expression in that U-word system. From this we can conclude, as we did with "something", that Gorgias is either a maker of faulty U-systems, in which case his whole program is inadequately founded, or he is not in the business of creating U-systems at all.

Of the above two options, the former seems the most likely true, although that that is the case is not as clear as one might

desire. On the one hand, Gorgias very much seems like the creator of the (faulty) U-system something, but on the other hand Gorgias seems to be treating "being" as a T-expression.

T-expressions have not been previously introduced, so let us now begin to consider them. When characterizing the U-word systems we have the sentence frame "what is the U of x". "X" holds place for a T-expression;[1] for example:

What is the height of John?
What is the length of the bridge?
What is the color of her hair?

There do not seem to ba any prima facie reasons for rejecting "being" as a T-expression as there were in the case of O-words, U-words and A-expressions. Since this is the case, our method of examination must change its direction here.

When we use a T-expression but do not know to what we refer with it, we are in a position to have that referent made clear to us. So, as a method of examination, let us see if we can intelligibly make out "being" as a T-expression and to what we would refer with it. If we can do this, well and good, for then we have a way of understanding Gorgias's usage; if not, then we can conclude that we are not truly in a position to say what he means by "being". In the latter case it becomes likely that "being" is either an A-expression or a T-expression, but most likely there is some confusion of these two roles as well as the role of O-words. In any case, what has occured is that the question is set up in an unclear way such that the method has gone awry.

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[1] More familiar terminology would be "sortal predicate".

It is worth noting that in holding "being" to be a T-expression, we are seeing Gorgias's work as the task of the physicist (to use Aristotle's way of posing the problem).

As there was considerable attraction for viewing "being" as an A-expression of the (corrupt) U-word system "something", so also there is reason to see "being" as a T-expression. In his one/many argument Gorgias divides being. Now one does not divide red, but the red chair. So as "chair" is a T-expression, then, on Gorgias's treatment, "being" is also a T-expression.[1]

But if "being" is a T-expression, what does it pick out? We are clearly not in a position with "being" to know what it picks out as we are with, say "chair". In order to come to an awareness of what we might pick out with the word "being" let us attempt to distinguish what might be meant. From there we can go on to discuss each alternative. The alternatives for "being" as a T-expression seem to be that with the word we pick out: a) something underlying things, b) the name of all individuals taken together, c) the container of all the individuals, and d) an individual.

A problem that we have to deal with must be brought to light. When we are examining the U-word hypothesis, the suggestion that this was what Gorgias was up to, made his position so far-fetched and unnecessarily wrong that it was safe to conclude that Gorgias

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[1] Since it is Ts that are cut up, divided, in containers, in places and so forth.

could not be attempting this. However, when we considered "being" as an A-expression, the hypothesis was not that far-fetched; in fact, that way of seeing the question was rather attractive. The question remained muddled, but an interesting muddle and not a howler. In treating "being" as a T-expression we certainly seem to run into both problems; that is, certain interpretations of "being" as a T-expression are too bizarre for us to entertain seriously. Other alternatives are not that bizarre, though seemingly incorrect, and likely one of them in combination with the idea of "being" as an A-expression and O-word is most appropriate. Ultimately I choose not to decide between three or four views on what Gorgias is doing. There is not sufficient evidence to choose between them since there is good evidence supporting each of them. This leads one to conclude that it is likely that Gorgias did not have some one target clearly in mind, but rather that he confused three or four tasks.

Cognizant of this view, let us see how "being" fares as a T-expression. Of the alternatives offered for "being" as a T-expression, let us begin with those which seem the easiest to deal with. We start by imagining that by "being" Gorgias intends to pick out an individual in the way that by saying "Plato", I may pick out a certain man and by saying "the bridge", I may pick out a certain bridge. On this view, by saying "being", we should pick out a thing called being. This view makes Gorgias's work silly--silly in that if Gorgias means by "being" to be like "table" then quite clearly his conclusions are wrong; for he forgot all about tables, chairs and so forth. Rather than accuse Gorgias of such

superficial thinking let us see whether there is not another reading of "being" as a T-expression in which Gorgias's task is more credible.[1]

Let us now take "being" as a T-expression for the container of the various things that comprise our world. This interpretation suffers because if Gorgias had wanted to argue this point, then we would expect him to say "if something,it exists either in being . . ." As well, although being was the container, he would also in his hypothesis need to hypothesize the contained. Thus according to this interpretation, Gorgias should have said "if there is something either it is _____ or in being . . ." However, since this is not the manner in which the problem has been presented by Gorgias it is quite safe to conclude that this is not what Gorgias was arguing.

We are now left with two alternatives, neither of which can be cast aside (which we are fairly safe to do with the above two interpretations of "being" as a T-expression). The two alternatives which command our attention are: (1) to take "being" as the name of all individuals in total, and (2) to take "being" as the name of a substrate underlying things.

Let us begin by taking "being" to be the collective name of all the individuals that are.[2] This would include things like the

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[1]This is not to contradict what we said about "being" in chapter one where similar considerations were brought forward. What we have shown here is that this interpretation would make Gorgias's arguments suseptable to criticisms that make his work obviously wrong. These criticisms are criticisms we earlier suggested his argument could not be suseptible to. Thus this interpretation is rejected and more plausible interpretations are considered.

[2]This is similar to the hair/hairs example mentioned much earlier; that is, "being" is a collective now and "beings" names the various individuals.

table, the chair and so on. The list would be immense and at times difficult to fill in--what of illusions?--but presumedly one could complete it. As to what might be meant by "non-being" we have some indication when Gorgias refers to imagined entites as non-beings. One is attracted to this interpretation at times (for instance, in the second section when a relation between being and beings is sought) but there are problems. If this was quite clearly Gorgias's hypothesis, then we would be completely unconvinced by his arguments that it is not many; for if being is but the name for the many things that are, then it becomes presumptious to argue that it cannot be many. If Gorgias suggests that "being" is not many, we ask many what? On this interpretation he must reply that it is the many things that are not many. Such an answer, however, is not adequate.[1]

So we are drawn in two different directions on this interpretation of "beings" as a T-expression. On the one hand, if we have any intuitions about what we refer to with "being", a collective name is one. This is one of the major attractions of this interpretation. On this interpretation we would be saying that a collective name is what he means by "being", but later we would have to say that his argument for it not being many is very poor reasoning indeed. On the other hand, we are drawn, by the error that would arise in his argument about the many, to say that Gorgias could not have meant this by "being".

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[1]We will later suggest a way in which even this argument could be altered (but note that it is not so altered) such that it would then accommodate the view of being offered here without making this argument foolish.

The other interpretation we can try is that "being" is the name of the substrate of the things that are; being is what subsists or underlies everything.[1] Being, then is like a material out of which things are made. We might ask from what a certain coat is made. The answer would be cloth and thread. If we asked what cloth and thread was made out of we might find that it was silk and wool. If we hold that there must be an end point in this process, that one must eventually find the "ultimate building blocks"--a view that the Greeks were very fond of--then one might hold that the substance from which everything came was being. According to this interpretation, Gorgias's attempt would have been to show that that from which things must be made did not exist and thus it is clear that that which is composed out of being (everything) could not exist either. There are some passages which indicate that Gorgias means this. These are passages in which Gorgias uses the verb hupokeimai and a participle formed from it (late in the third section of the argument). Here we seem to be getting at something that underlies things. The reservation one has about adopting this view is that were Gorgias maintaining this he could have been much more clear about his point. We would expect him to say something like the following at the end of the first section: "Since being, which underlies everything, does not exist, thus neither can anything else". As well, if he had meant to argue that nothing existed because that which underlied did not exist, he would not have to

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[1] I throw these terms out together and here attempt no distinguishment.

argue against the other two paths. Yet he does. Thus, once again, we cannot plunge wholeheartedly into accepting this particular interpretation.

There have been four different views on what is meant by "being" that we have found which deserve to be taken quite seriously when reading Gorgias. Each view has both strengths and weaknesses. One might attempt to press the point further to see which truly is the correct view. Doing so would mean that we reject those views that have very definite strengths and do, at times, seem perfectly appropriate. As well, we would accept as correct an interpretation that clearly has faults and areas where it is inapplicable. Rather than that, however, it would seem best to adopt a course suggested at an earlier point in this paper; that is, to hold that Gorgias did not have one particular target in mind, but rather we can distinguish at least four different things that he, on different occasions, aimed at. Our claim, then, is not to offer a final way of understanding the hypothesis that "if there is something, either being . . ." Instead we suggest that on different occasions "being" is treated as an A-expression, on other occasions as an O-word, and on still other occasions as a T-expression which is a collective name, and finally on other occasions as a T-expression that names the material from which the things that are, are made of. Such an answer prevents one from having a nice, neat, final way of understanding Gorgias, but this solution is probably much closer to the truth.

We have just seen that what Gorgias means, when he suggests

that being is one of the things that can exist if there is something is a confusion of four different things. It appears, then, that the topic which Gorgias takes up is a confused one.

Gorgias, from the start does not have a proper problem; his solution thus becomes superfluous. Our other arguments about the force of "non" and "not" lead us to believe that even were being one legitimate alternative, the other two alternatives are not. So in this case Gorgias would have only offered one alternative (being) and, once again, his question looks unsatisfactory. In addition to this, we have examined the something/nothing dichotomy and have shown where it might be in error. Here we were not able to conclude that Gorgias was in error, but only where the error might be.

Our advancement so far has been to show that the problem as set up by Gorgias is not legitimate. This is one way, and perhaps the most interesting and effective way, of dealing with a philosopher. We now leave this method of examination behind and assume that the problem does make sense and that we do understand the various alternatives offered. We do this so that we can examine the different arguments set forth.

Gorgias proceeds in paragraph sixty-six to tell us that none of the consequences which should follow upon something existing do follow. Since none of the consequences arise, then it must be the case that that upon which they depend (something) does not exist. The interlocutors position--holding that something exists--is not tenable and therefore needs to be rejected. Since one is forced to abandon the hypothesis of something existing, the alternative position, which is Gorgias's position of nothing existing, must be

adopted as a result.

At this juncture, the framework of the reductio is evident. Whether the conclusion that nothing exists has been established--here we put aside our objections to the way that the problem is set up--is not yet available to us for we have not seen the arguments against being, non-being and being and non-being. Nevertheless, we can tell that the argument would be correct in as much as we hold that Gorgias can argue against the three alternatives and that the alternatives are exhaustive.

Given our reservations about the way the problem has been asked, we now turn to sixty-seven where the arguments against non-being, are undertaken. Gorgias's overall intention, you will recall, is that one must reject each of his three alternatives, one of which must follow on their being something.

One thing that has yet to be mentioned, but that becomes obvious from the way the issue is set in sixty-six, is that the underpinnings for the argument are very different in the case of Gorgias than they were in the case of Parmenides. In revealing the name of the route, in the case of Parmenides, one had already brought to a close the issue of whether or not the thing exists. The name "being" not only named the route taken, but also revealed its existential status. The name "being", for Parmenides, functions not only as a name, but also reveals whether or not it exists. From this we can see how Parmenides's arguments work and, as well, we can criticize the assimilation of naming with the question of whether the thing exists. Gorgias's work, to a limited extent, is

in contrast with this approach. He reveals the subjects of his discourse--being, non-being, and being and non-being--but does not take such a revelation to settle, in any way, the issues of whether they exist. Gorgias's work is not overridden by the (Eleatic) assumption that the name not only names but also that certain names reveal something about the existential status of the thing. Although Gorgias's arguments are not controlled by such a thesis, he relies on such an assumption at times. Thus although Gorgias begins to remove himself from the error he at times falls under Parmenides's spell.

4) Non-Being Does Not Exist

The first of the alternatives that Gorgias considers is the existence of non-being. One would be fairly inclined to accept that this does not exist, primarily for reasons of common sense in conjunction with Parmenides's work on the three ways. Upholding the alternatives of which one's audience will most easily be convinced has the rhetorical advantage of moving the audience so that they will see the arguer as holding an acceptable position. Aristotle in the Rhetoric (1356a) would suggest such a course of action. It is advantageous to put one's audience in a fit state of mind, making them pleased and friendly; thus later, when more contentious points are raised, the audience will be less likely to balk since they are sympathetic with the arguer.

As Gorgias is engaged in a reductio on the hypothesis that something exists, so he is engaged also, in his first argument, in a reductio of non-being. The steps of the argument are: (1) positing

non-being; (2) claiming that contradictory characteristics follow, namely that it must both exist and yet not exist; (3) claiming that holding to a contradiction is not possible and absurd; and (4) overthrowing the assumption which leads to the conflict, or, in other words, rejecting that non-being exists. This is the general plan of the argument. We need now take a detailed look at how the assumption of non-being leads to impossible consequences. That is, we must look at the second move in the argument.

We stated in the first chapter that Parmenides saw thinking and being to be on a par. The position of Parmenides was that both thinking and being lead in the same way to the path of truth. Gorgias splits the pair, and sees the two to be importantly different such that they lead to very different conclusions. For Gorgias, when non-being is thought of as itself, when one considers what its nature is, then it is not thought to exist. The rationale is that the nature of non-being is non-being or not existing, so in thinking about the subject we turn to think about non-being. In other words, the name "non-being", when thought about, reveals something about its existential status. (Here Gorgias does seem to be relying on Parmenides's way of reasoning.). From here it is but a short move to saying that when we think about it we think of it as not existing.

If, however, the considerations of thinking of a thing as itself are appropriate, why is it that Gorgias can draw the conclusion he does rather than starting an infinite regress? For example, we think about non-being$_1$, its nature is non-being$_2$ (perhaps

even non-existing); but if the question of how it (non-being$_1$) is thought of makes sense, non-being$_2$ being the manner, then why cannot we also ask about the status of that manner (non-being$_2$)? One could go on in this fashion indefinitely. The problem is this: one may ask of a tree whether it exists, and one may go on to investigate that question. However, if one sets out its essence or itself, as is the case with non-being, in answer to the question of whether it exists, we are puzzled about how this is to answer that question. We get no closer to knowing whether a tree exists by finding out what its essence or it is.

There is one way in which the essence or the thing itself might reveal whether or not the thing exists: if we used the word "tree" not only to reveal what was under discussion, but also to reveal something about that thing. We are now playing with the word (tree) such that the word is not only the name but also a description. To do this is to put too many demands on a word, and we must distinguish the two roles sufficiently so that the one role cannot hold to the coat tails of the other. "What is it?" and "Does it exist?" are, and must remain, distinct questions which require distinct answers. Gorgias's argument asks the former question and hopes that thinking of what it is will answer the latter question. But "non-being" cannot have the two roles. The latter question, then, remains open; in knowing that it is non-being, one is not in a position to know whether it exists (at least without further arguments).

Let it be pointed out again that if thinking about non-

being as itself is sufficient to show that it does not exist, that is, if we allowed that from thinking about non-being as itself one revealed it as non-being--here taken to mean not existing--then, because we have here legitimized the confusion of the two questions, "What is it" and "Does it exist", we are in a position to ask of the non-being$_2$, the does not exist, its existential status. We have moved the argument one step back; we could continue to do so. Gorgias has given license to a confusion and we continue the project. Thus the argument that Gorgias begins, if applied properly (and granting the confusion) does not lead to non-being's not existing but rather to an infinite regress. A regress whose completion is both necessary and impossible in order to discover whether non-being exists or not. By not allowing the confusion, we split the two questions and the latter question, the question of existence, has not yet been considered.

There is a different way of criticizing this argument. We see Gorgias assuming that non-being exists and then asking himself whether it exists. That however does not seem right. The very assumption of existence makes fruitless a discussion of the sort where we ask if the thing exists or not. An example will help to illustrate this point. Suppose I wish to paint my room red. I might assume it to be red and wonder whether or not my indigo couch will go with the room. This sort of discussion makes sense. It does not make any sense, however, to assume that the room is red and then to query whether if it is red it would be red. We already assumed that much. There is no need or sense in discussing whether

or not it would be red. Similarly, on the assumption of non-being's existence there is no point in discussing the issue of whether or not it exists. If one did not make the initial assumption there would be an issue to discuss, but with the assumption there is not. Thus, of this argument of Gorgias's we can say that the considerations he gives make no sense at all; the argument is neither right nor wrong.

Having dealt with the translation which holds that non-being is thought of as non-being, we should also consider the alternate translation where non-being is thought of as non-existence. On this translation the analysis is different. First of all, we no longer have a case of self-predication. The result of this is that there is no longer a prima facie reason for bringing in infinite regresses. Similarly there is not the conflation between name and description: "non-being" is the name, non-existence is the description. The criticism of the argument, as given earlier, that is valid here is the remark that the discussion of the existence of a subject is fruitless when the assumption upon which the argument rests is that it does exist (the indigo couch case). Thus we must still hold that Gorgias's way of deriving the non-existence of non-being is not correct. It needs to be made clear that if he were to say that non-being is non-existence and not make any assumptions about its existence, we probably could concur with Gorgias's conclusions.[1]

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[1]There is something odd about Gorgias saying non-being is thought of as non-existence. Is he saying this to identify non-being with non-existence, or is it that non-being is thought of as a non-existence? Since the examination of the argument as construed this

We have now finished with the first prong of the argument against non-being. Gorgias, having considered non-being, begins to talk about what it is. This leads to the opposite conclusion from considering non-being. When talking about what something is, one is assuming that it is. Thus non-being exists. That is since, non-being is non-being or since non-being is non-existence--here it will not make any important difference which of the readings is used--we are saying that it is something. Even when what is is non-existence or non being, it remains the cases that it is that. We are thus holding that it exists.

This argument is quite interesting for two quite different reasons. The first field of investigation is the use of "is" in "non-being is non-being" (or alternately "non-existence"). The second field is the issue of self-predication that occurs only on our reading of the text.

Let us begin with a very general criticism of the second prong. This criticism we take from our discussion of the first prong of the argument. There we suggested that assuming the existence of non-being and then asking whether it exists or not was incorrect methodology because the assumption renders the question meaningless. The case of the indigo couch was offered to help us see the point; that point applies here. Upon the assumption of non-being, we cannot

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way is only to augment what we already know rather than a detailed examination, I will not go into the issue. It will not make any difference to the objection offered.

ask whether it exists or not; that becomes an inappropriate question to ask. Hence we need to conclude that Gorgias reductio is improperly arranged, which leaves the conclusions not binding.

If we hold to the reading of Gorgias that is recommended by us we have before us the first example of self-predication. Self-predicating non-being of non-being was depended upon in the first prong, but here he is quite explicit about it. If this is true, then Gorgias seems to be the originator of the problem in Greek philosophy. Often this matter is thought to have originated with Plato in his theory of the forms. However, from this, it is clear that the "honor" goes to Gorgias.

Discussions of Plato on self-predication revolve on the issue of whether it is clear or not that he is guilty of self-predication. It is assumed that if he is using self-predication, then he has made a philosophic blunder. That self-predication is an error is something that is well-worked out in the tradition; for instance that quickly leads to an infinite regress. Because of this there is little responsibility on us to point out that self-predication is an error. We can almost point out that Gorgias is using self-predication here and, in conjunction with the remarks on this in our examination of the first prong of the argument, take it that the argument is fairly evidently incorrect.

We say "almost" for it might be worth pointing out why self-predication is an error. One way of getting at the problem with self-predication is to examine the accomplishments of the speaker

when saying "non-being is non-being".[1] Let us take a slightly different example. For instance, "non-being is a tree". When we say "non-being" we make clear what it is that we are talking about, namely, non-being. When we say "is" we make it clear that we are going on--thus there is something that needs completion. When we utter the words "a tree" we say what it is that non-being is. Thus the speaker starts to say what he is saying continues and completes successfully. In the case of self-predication the story is somewhat different. Again, when we say "non-being" we make clear what it is that we are talking about. When we say "is" we make it clear that we are going on. Again it is evident that there is something that needs completion. The listener now expects the speaker to finish off by saying what it is that non-being is. However, his expectations are not fulfilled. Rather than saying what it is that non-being is the speaker tells us again what it is that he is talking about. That, however, was perfectly clear already. The speaker has not gone on to complete what he was saying, rather he has started continued and then started again. Thus we see self-predication to be inadequate because the speaker fails to complete what he started. This failure to complete saying something can hardly convince one that what is being talked about does not exist.

If the "non-existence" translation is correct then the

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[1] I have come to appreciate the value in this method of examining issues through my association with Richard Bosley.

criticism of self-predication is not relevant to Gorgias. On this account Gorgias does go on to complete what he was saying; namely he goes on to say that non-being can be identified with non-existence (or be a non-existent thing, depending on how one takes the force of the claim). In any case, we need a further argument against Gorgias, if we are to disagree with his conclusions.

In countering the claim "non-being is non-existence" or "non-being"--for the moment we will suspend the problems that arise from self-predication--which leads one to conclude that non-being must exist because it <u>is</u> something, that is exists, we must consider the force of uttering the word "is". J. S. Mill, among others, has suggested that there are at least two senses of "is", the copulative and the existential. It is suggested that the Greeks often confused the two; moving from the copulative to a conclusion about the existential.

Let us examine this approach. It is not clear that one should say that in English there is an existential use of "is", however, in Greek <u>esti</u> can be read both as "is" and "exists". Yet the confusion in Greek need not arise because the two uses can be differentiated by accentuation in written work, (which doubtless reflects a difference in oral pronunciation). Thus that there is a distinction ought to be as clear to the user of the Greek language as the user of the English language. As we suggest that there seems to be problems in holding to an existential sense of "is", we also suggest that there is difficulty in calling a use of "is" copulative. It is by no means apparent that one does any joining, literal or

figurative) with the use of "is", for it is hard to see what a joining whether it be predicates, things, or concepts would be like. And if that joining could be seen, it would be hard to understand what that has to do with saying "x is y".

With these criticisms of Mill's analysis of the issue we can now use what is behind Mill's work and what seems to be true. We must make a distinction between the use of "is" in "He is here" and "exists" in "He exists". In saying "he is here" we utter "is" in the process of going on to say where he is. By doing this we make no claim regarding his existence, although it may or may not be assumed. This point is much more perspicuous in saying "love is everything", or "truth is beauty", or "the square circle is self-contradictory", or "Snow White is very pretty". In these examples it is quite clear that by uttering the word "is" one has no reason to believe that the subject exists. Mill would explain this point by saying that the "is" of copulation (which he holds to be found in the above examples) gives us no room for one to conclude an existential statement.

Gorgias has made the logical move that both Mill and we show (though in different ways) is illegitimate. We can then conclude that from the statement that "non-being is non-being" or "non-existence" we have no room to conclude that the subject, non-being, exists. Thus we reject the conclusion of this argument of Gorgias.

Gorgias now takes the results of both prongs to force us to drop the assumption of being existing. On that assumption we

were lead to believe that it both existed and did not exist. The assumption then leads one to hold p & -p. Since this is impossible, the assumption upon which it rests are given up.

Of this argument it is necessary to say that it is reasonable to abandon an assumption that leads to contradictory consequences. This is indirect proof and is a legitimate way to argue; however, the means by which Gorgias gets the contradiction is, as argued above, incorrect. Thus Gorgias's arguments should not persuade one that non-being does not exist.

Let us examine the second of Gorgias's arguments against the existence of non-being. The argument is given in sixty-seven. We will examine it by criticizing the argument as well as offering further objections after this.

The issue is still whether or not non-being exists. Gorgias begins by assuming non-being to exist. Once more, the stage is set for a reductio. Gorgias grants his adversaries' position and from that position attempts to draw a conclusion that his opponent cannot accept. (It might add some life to the argument were one to imagine the argument directed against the atomists view that non-being exists. This is not to suggest that the only target of Gorgias's is the atomist, but is a ploy we can use to bring the issue into sharper focus).[1]

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[1]Let us not forget to view this argument, as well as the previous argument, against non-being in the context of a reductio against those who would hold that anything exists.

By assuming that non-being exists (which is to also hold that existence is applied to non-being) we find that its "opposite",[1] being, does not exist (which is to hold that non-existence applies to being).

There are three moves to this point in the argument. The first is to hold that being and non-being are opposites. The second is to further expand the talk of the existence of being or non-being into considerations of existence and non-existence applying to these subjects. The last move is to hold that opposites have opposite characteristics. We will discuss two of these moves before going on to give the rest of the argument.

We begin with the question of being and non-being as opposites. Earlier, when we were attempting to discover what "being" could mean, the view that being and non-being were opposites was considered. There it was found that being and non-being were not opposites. Since this is the case, Gorgias argument must be incorrect; it relies on false premises.

Let us consider the view that opposites are applied to opposites.[2] This view is offered in another place. In paragraph eighty Gorgias says: "For opposites occur with opposites, and non-being is the opposite of being". This passage reaffirms the principle of opposition mentioned above and the contention that Gorgias sees being and non-being as opposites. As well, we learn that not only

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[1] This is one of the places where it is quite clear that, at times, Gorgias treats "being" and "non-being" as O-words.

[2] This view will be known as "the principal of opposition".

are opposites applied to each other, but also, that they occur with each other. There is, in addition to this internal evidence, a precendent for the principle of opposition in Gorgias's predecessors and contemporaries.

Parmenides saw being and non-being as having opposite characteristics such that one was and the other was not. In Parmenides's work the two, being and non-being, are radically distinguished and a claim that the two can share no characteristics seems to keep the spirit of his work. Heraclitus talks of the necessity of there being opposites. He also suggests that opposites arise from each other, but that it is death to become the other. This point that it is death to become the other seems to be in operation in Gorgias's work. The keeping of the characteristics separate so that what one says about one subject is not to be said about its opposite, (indeed, only the opposite things can be said of the opposite) seems to be a development of the notion that death arises when one of the opposites begins to share of the other. The Pythagorean table of opposition is that which is the principles of things. Neither this table, however, nor Alcaemon's view that health is found as the mean between opposites, seems to bear on Gorgias's work on opposition. Empedecoles argues that with earth we see earth, and water with water. Such a view seems to keep the opposites separate. Clearly the intent is different in the work of Empedecoles, nevertheless, the notion of separateness is common to both Empedecoles and Gorgias. We see from this that Gorgias's principle of opposition is not foreign to Greek thinking. Certainly Gorgias has expanded and

developed the principle in his own way, but he has relied on ideas already under consideration. His special indebtedness to Parmenides would make the principle that much easier to accept since Gorgias's work is centred on Parmenides. Gorgias here appears not as one who is offering new principles but one who is depending on old ones and showing that they lead elsewhere than suspected.

We can see a historical precedent for the principle of opposition and as such why Gorgias would be able to persuade someone by appealing to such a principle. We must now question whether we should be persuaded by this. We put aside the point that being and non-being are not opposites. For the moment we assume that they are.

In general, Gorgias's claim regarding opposition seems to lack support. If I am opposite George in temperament it does not follow that his characteristics and mine are opposite. If I draw a conclusion opposite to yours it does not follow that all your arguments are in opposition. Obviously we may share much common ground. Some sort of plea for essential versus incidental properties must be brought forth. An attempt must be made to bring out the respects in which we want to say opposed things are opposed; Aristotle's work on an essential/accidental distinction, though perhaps problematic, was very necessary to Greek thought.

We have reached the point where since non-being has existence applied to it, being must have non-existence applied to it; hence being does not exist,--the principle of opposition being Gorgias's guiding rule. The argument goes on to hold that this conclusion derived from Gorgias's adversaries' position is not possible. This

is an appeal to our sensibilities. Who would think to deny that being exists? Have we not learned otherwise from Parmenides? No one, not even an atomist, will want to hold to such a position. Since we "know" that being is not non-existent we drop the assumption that it is non-existent and, by the principle of opposition, also drop the assumption that non-being exists.[1]

Now that we have seen the whole argument let us take up the discussion of existence and non-existence. Gorgias's first argument against non-being uses the contrast between noein and einai as a device to draw his conclusions. In the argument now under discussion, he uses the device of talking about the properties of his subjects. Gorgias's device per se is quite legitimate. In talking of the leaves of a tree I might talk about their color. The color is seen to be a property of the leaf. That much is fine. However, the property that Gorgias wishes to talk about is existence, and, what is worse, the property of non-existence. It seems to make sense to

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[1]Notice that in this last part of the argument Gorgias has not gone so far as to claim that being does exist. The argument under consideration does not focus on being and hence is not interested in making any claims about it. By putting his position in this way rather than saying that being exists, Gorgias avoids contradicting his later conclusion that being does not exist. Although there is no explicit contradiction between the assumption here that being does exist and the conclusion, offered later, that it does not exist, still (when Gorgias argues that being does not exist) one feels that he cannot hold both that conclusion and the argument against the existence of non-being--one must go.

say of this leaf that it exists or that the golden mountain does not exist. It is another step, however, to claim that these things have the property of existence or non-existence, or to say that existence or non-existence applies to these things.

Two questions immediately arise. First even if existence makes headway as a property does non-existence? Second, is existence a property? Let us begin with the first issue.

From our previous remarks on "not" and "non" we do have a method for an analysis of the claim that non-existence applies to being. In treating non-existence as a property we are, once again, thinking of non-existence as something that contrasts with existence. In thinking of non-existence as applying to something we must think that there is something to be applied. In this view if one were able to put existence in one's pocket, so also one could put non-existence in the same pocket. However, our work on "non" shows that we do not name something with "non", rather we deny something of something. This makes it clear that non-existence could never go into the pocket, could never be applied. Thus Gorgias's claim of applying non-existence to being is corrupt even if applying existence is not. As such the argument fails by depending on the view that non-existence is something.

Let us now see what we can do with applying existence. The discussion centres on the issue of whether or not existence is a predicate of a thing. Gorgias's stand is quite clear; he takes existence to be a predicate and, in fact, he seems to think it a property or thing that can be added to something. A very involved

discussion of whether or not existence is a predicate is not appropriately taken up here; for it is an issue that, if detailed, would take up too much room. I would suggest existence is not a predicate. Let me support this claim in a short while by considerations of "applying". Here let us deal with the view by a quotation from Kant:

> Being is evidently not a real predicate, or a concept of something that can be added to the concept of a thing. It is merely the admission of a thing and of a certain determination in it.[1]

Thus ends our rather short discussion of existence as a predicate.[2]

If it can be agreed that existence is not a predicate, then Gorgias's argument cannot be set up in the fashion he "uses". He has used a principle of opposition--one pair is being and non-being, the other pair is existence and non-existence. If existence is not a predicate then the latter pair cannot be appropriately construed as a pair and hence is not subject to the principle. Thus Gorgias's argument cannot proceed to the point where being is non-existent and non-being is existent.

One might attempt to defend Gorgias from the above criticisms by suggesting that in denying that existence is a property we do no harm to Gorgias's argument. For, after all we rejected the

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[1] Kant Immanuel, Critique of Pure Reason, translated by Max Muller, page 401.

[2] Let me emphasize my regret at not taking up this problem in more detail. However, to say any more on this issue would either mean writing another thesis or fooling ourselves with a simple solution.

"properties" translation. Thus the issue must be argued by considering "applies to" and not "properties". Examined in this way, we do allow that one can say that the leaf exists. But were we to say that existence applies to the leaf we sound, at the very least, like we are talking of some property that the leaf may or may not have. "The very least" is suggested since, when one considers paint "being applied" to the house one is not applying a property but a bucket of paint. Claiming that existence is a property is contentious enough--as we have seen--but grouping existence in with buckets of paint is simply wild.

When one thinks about what it is that can be applied it becomes clear that existence is not that sort of thing. One is not going to see the existence. Existence is not like paint. It is not a substance. Thinking that it is is confused and so is an argument that uses this manner of speaking. From our examination we gather that Gorgias is, at least, thinking of existence as a property. This has been argued to be incorrect. However, it seems quite likely that his doctrine is even worse, for his talk of applying puts existence in the realm of substances rather than properties. Such doctrine is undoubtedly false.

If we put these problems behind us, we come across another issue that in many ways is much more serious. One wonders why Gorgias's appeal to sensibilities works; (that is, why is it the case that everyone is to balk at the claim that non-existence applies to being? Clearly there is the appeal to Parmenides. But does not this mean that in depending on this, Gorgias is committing

Parmenides's errors? Earlier we distinguished between the use of a word as a name and as a way of telling us something about the subject; with a name one names and does not describe nor reveal things about the named. Yet Gorgias must be relying on just this confusion, otherwise one would not think being existed. Gorgias, at this point in the argument, has not removed himself from the errors of his forefathers.

The point here, then, is that we ought not balk at saying non-existence applies to being (if we can talk this way at all). If one does not balk at this, then the absurdity does not arise and one is not persuaded by Gorgias's argument.

This then ends SE's recording of Gorgias's first part of the arguments against anything existing, the conclusion of which Gorgias takes to be the non-existence of non-being. Gorgias, in his arguments, seems to have picked out two major opponents: (1) the followers of Parmenides--noein and einai--and (2) the atomists --non-being and not existing. The arguments are set out to convince all, but as well special attention is given to the misleading work of Gorgias's rivals.

If we have dealt with SE's account of the "easy" alternative, let us study some related remarks made by PA (979a24-33). Here is Loveday and Forester's translation of the argument. This argument is recorded here because I think there is no coherent argument offered. Untersteiner and Loenen seem to mention no particular problem with it, however, neither do they attempt anything but a superficial analysis of the argument. Since I take a quite different

stand than they I think it important to see all the evidence.

> . . . after first stating his own special proof that it is not possible either to be or not to be. For, he says, if Not-to-Be is Not-to-Be, then Not-Being would be no less than Being. For Not-being is Not-being and Being is Being, so that things no more are than are not. But if Not-to-be is, then, he argues, To-Be, its opposite, is not; for if Not-to-Be is, it follows that To-Be is not. So that on this showing, he says, nothing could be unless To-Be and Not-to-Be are the same thing. And if they are the same thing, even so nothing would be; for Not-being is not, nor yet Being, since it is the same as Not-being. Such, then, is his first argument.[1]

The procedure that will be followed is that we will attempt to explain this argument until we find either that no explanation is possible or that we can give an explanation. As well as doing this we will make reference to where we see the same or similar considerations in SE. It should be noted that since this argument is importantly different than any some one argument found in SE, finding a place to include this argument such that we augment our work on SE is difficult. We choose this spot since the argument we are considering borrows heavily from the argument just considered. The solution is not, however, completely satisfactory; for this argument has parts similar to arguments in SE we have not yet considered.

The argument as found in PA gets us to agree to the following: (1) Not-to-Be is Not-to-Be (2) Being is Being (3) Not-being is Not-being. From (1) Gorgias draws the conclusion that not-being is in

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[1]Here we will not bother implementing our translations of the infinitives and participles. Since the argument breaks down anyway, nothing turns on it.

the same way as being. And this is thought to mean that not-to-be exists. (This is similar to the point brought up in the second half of sixty-seven of SE. The problems with this have already been discussed and we need say no more about the use of "is".[1]) Gorgias next suggests that the opposite of not-to-be is not. The principle of opposition seems to be the reasoning here. (Once again, the reasoning and its errors are quite familiar to us.) Gorgias now suggests that nothing exists unless existence and non-existence are the same. The reason for this seems somewhat obscure, but it must have to do with our discovery that being and not-being exist in the same way. That they exist in the same way somehow suggests that to exist existence and non-existence must be the same. (When we examine SE's remarks on being and non-being, we will see a clearer argument regarding the notion of the same.) However, even when they are the same, nothing would exist; for non-being is not and since being is the same as this, it also does not exist. Thus Gorgias concludes that nothing can exist.[2]

This argument seems to lack a central thread such that it is not exactly clear how all the parts relate or follow. There are within this argument parts of four different arguments that we see in SE; thus that we see no some one thread is not surprising, for there is none to be seen. One must conclude that although this

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[1]Here, however, there is the further difficulty that Gorgias is moving from the infinitive construction to the participle construction without any reason.

[2]This last move seems similar to the argument recorded by SE against the existence of being and non-being.

argument does seem to be moving to a conclusion, it does so in no clear way. PA has condensed (or has heard a condensed) version of Gorgias's arguments. The condensation, however, has made the argument quite unintelligible; we can see the arguments much more clearly in SE.[1]

The supposedly "original" argument of Gorgias turns out not to be an argument at all, but only parts of different arguments. We need not concern ourselves with an analysis of the argument for there is no argument. What merits there are in the various parts of the argument we have discussed and will discuss in our comments on SE's version.

We should also mention that PA criticizes the "argument" that he records. There are two things that are worth mentioning. The first is that PA notes the misuse of "is" implicit in Gorgias's argument. That is not to say he criticizes it adequately, but he does see the difficulty. The second point is that PA remarks that if things no more are than are not then why do we say everything is, rather than nothing is. This point we will use later when considering SE's version of the rejection of being and non-being.

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[1] Kerferd makes a very valiant effort to make sense of this argument. I am not prepared to discuss his remarks since his procedure involves emending the text and, as well, assumes Gorgias to be talking about our ability to predicate the verb "to be". In our introduction we suggest why we do not take the latter point and since our work on PA is supplementary it is not our business here to start to emend that text.

5) Being Does Not Exist

a) The Spatial/Temporal Argument

At sixty-eight SE records Gorgias's analysis of his second alternative, which is that being exists. The first argument against the existence of being is complex and lengthy. We must recognize at the beginning of this argument that Gorgias's goal is to prove that being does not exist; this he argues for in the following manner. In sixty-eight Gorgias sets up the reductio format. With the hope of showing that being does not exist, Gorgias tries to find what some of being's properties would be, if it were to exist. Gorgias concludes that being, were it to exist, would be: (a) everlasting, (b) created, or (c) both created and everlasting. Gorgias suggests that none of these alternatives are correct; he thereby concludes that being does not exist.

Providing that the three possibilities do follow upon being's existence and are exhaustive, there is the framework for a valid argument. It would, then, only remain for Gorgias to show why each of the three alternatives fail. But why are these three options the only options? Gorgias gives no argument for this, thus we are asked to take the point to be obvious. We must see how obvious it is.

The problem under consideration is the existence of being. For the moment we assume it to exist. If being exists, a question arises regarding when and/or if it came to exist. What sort of temporal existence does it have? One answer to the problem could be that it never came to exist. That leaves open two options:

(a) it always existed or was, in other words, everlasting, aidon; (b) it does not exist even now. Although Gorgias is, in the final analysis, attracted to (b) that option is not considered here since it overthrows the assumption made concerning being's existence. Alternative (a), however, must be one of the contenders for being's temporal existence.

A different alternative to the idea of everlasting is that being was created at some time; that is there is a time when it does not exist and a time when it does exist.

Having the above two options for the temporal existence of something seems reasonable and is in line with previous thought, by Greek philosophers, on the matter. Of a different subject, motion, Anaximander comes to similar conclusions. He says: "Did motion come into being at some time . . . or did it neither come to be nor is destroyed, but it always existed and will go on forever".[1]

But what if it should prove that being can be neither of the two options? Are there other options about the coming to be of being when we suggest that being exists? Gorgias offers a third alternative by combining the previous two options. This alternative is that being is everlasting (always existing) and created (there is a time at which it did not exist).

We have already seen why the first two alternatives arise and why they are bona fide alternatives. Now we need to consider the third option to see if there is any more to it than the apparent

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[1]Kirk and Raven, The Pre-Socratic Philosophers, #118, p. 127.

attraction that Gorgias has for offering two alternatives and then combining them in order to produce a third alternative (e.g. being, non-being, being and non-being).

Let us undertake a conceptual analysis of Gorgias's third alternative. The phrase "everlasting and created" may be meant to signify more than one thing. The first thing it might signify is similar to one of Kant's alternatives when he is considering the notion of infinity.[1] This conception is of something that is created at some time and goes on forever from that point; thus created and also everlasting. The problem with this view is that it is not truly a third choice. The alternative of created, (b), does not exclude the possibility that created things could go on thereafter. On this reading of the third alternative, we do not have, in fact, a third alternative, but two options with the introduction of a subset of the first alternative brought in as if it were a new consideration. Furthermore, another problem with this view is that it is unlikely that the Greeks could allow that there was a time before the everlasting began. In the above quotation from Anaximander, for example, there is no hint of such an idea.

A second interpretation of the everlasting and created alternative is that being always was and will be, yet it was created. However, here it becomes impossible to make sense of its creation. If being is created, it is created at a time; it makes sense to speak

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[1] Found in the first antimony in the Critique of Pure Reason.

about the moment before creation, in which case there was a time when it was not and the thing is not everlasting except in the Kantian sense. The only other way to preserve the idea of creation is to hold that time began and at the beginning of time being was created. One thereby holds that there was no time before creation and time, yet this move is confused. The hands of the clock may start to move, we may begin to keep track of time but that is not for time to begin. Time itself does not begin though we begin to measure the time.[1] Thus the attempted second interpretation either reduces itself to the first alternative, in which case it should be properly listed with the first alternative; or else it is based on the false assumption that time begins and thus is not an adequate alternative.

An interpretation of Gorgias's third option that need not be taken too seriously is one which holds that being is "outside" time and yet created. This alternative seems both incomprehensible and foreign to Greek thought. If one considers this alternative, one begins to wonder how something is created (at a time) if it is outside of time? What is creation if not something that happens at a time? How does one still maintain that the thing is everlasting if it is outside time? Interpretations that take this direction are beset with too many insoluble difficulties. Thus the "outside time" interpretation needs no more entertaining than has already been given to it.

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[1] If there is persuasiveness in this point, it cannot be properly attributed to me, but rather to Richard Bosley.

The first two interpretations of the third alternative seem to be the only serious contenders, but even these are not adequate. One is not really another alternative, the other is not entirely coherent.

Let us leave the question of which explanation Gorgias intended at this point until we come to Gorgias's argument against the third alternative. Gorgias's reasons for rejecting the third alternative will illuminate what he means by "created and everlasting".[1]

Gorgias now begins an analysis of being as everlasting. Presumably, he hopes to show that this concept is internally inconsistent and to force us to reject any notion that the thing exists. If being is everlasting, then Gorgias suggests that it does not have a beginning (Here Gorgias makes a parenthetical remark which is a pun on the argument beginning here which concludes there is no beginning for everlasting being. This pun also seems to be a bit of a jibe at fragment five of Parmenides.) The reason why

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[1]A review of the progress of the argument would be helpful here. Gorgias is arguing against being with a reductio. He supposes being to exist. If it is to exist, Gorgias claims that it must be either: (a) created, (b) everlasting, or (c) created and everlasting. We have attempted to explain why these options arise. On the question of the temporal nature of being we see the need for the first two options. The third option does not seem appropriate because it does not seem to make any sense. There do not seem to be any further alternatives needed beyond the first two. If Gorgias can legitimately deny both of these in regard to being, then we hold his argument against being's existence to be successful. In advance of the argument we should say that his method for dealing with the third alternative is likely to be agreeable to us in that, he, like us, does not argue against the alternative but rather for the coherency of this position.

alternative (b) does not have a (temporal) beginning must be assumed to be clear via a conceptual analysis of the terms involved. This is to say that if something is everlasting, it could not be thought to have a beginning. For if it has a beginning, then there was a time before which it was not. But if there is a time before which something was, then one would not think that the thing was everlasting.[1] Anaximander provided Gorgias this conception of the everlasting having no beginning when he said ". . . of the infinite there is no

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[1]The discussion of everlasting and a beginning has been a temporal discussion; later Gorgias also talks of being as boundless. The difficulty with these notions is that one easily slips from a temporal discussion to a spatial discussion and it seems clear that Gorgias on one occasion does move from talking in a temporal sense to talking in a spatial sense. We must be aware of this in order to see the difficulties and virtues it introduces into Gorgias's argument.

It seems that so far the discussion is temporal. Gorgias offers as alternatives everlasting and created. "Everlasting" if understood in a temporal manner, can be seen as offering an alternative to "created". The alternatives seem exclusive of each other and do present a reasonable choice (vide: above). If, however we read "everlasting" as a comment on the physical stature of being, then there would be no appropriate contrast. Why being is either of a particular physical stature or of a certain temporal origin makes no sense without further explanation (and what that explanation would be is by no means obvious). Since there is no such explanation and since the contrast is not readily understandable, we abandon this interpretation for one that is (here) solely temporal.

Related to this discussion is a point about the relationship Gorgias's argument bears to the argument of Melissus. Gorgias has argued from aidon to ouk ekei archon. Melissus in his argument progressed in the same way and in a temporal manner. Melissus progresses from this point to apeiron (which is thought to be a spatial comment). As we will see, Gorgias also does this.

From the apparent similarities in the two arguments we see that Gorgias, once again, takes the premises of his predecessors and uses them to his own conclusion. As well, by the fact that Gorgias's argument is using the same terms as Melissus we would suspect that he would be using them in the same way. This will further confirm the point that the argument of Gorgias as so far considered is temporal, but that it will soon be spatial.

beginning . . ."[1]

Gorgias's next step in the argument, found at the beginning of sixty-nine, is to make a quite general point. Gorgias suggests that all things created have a beginning. Doubtless from this we can infer that if being which is one of all things, is created (alternative (a)), then it has a beginning. Why alternative (a), (created things), would have a beginning must also be assumed to be obvious via an analysis of the terms involved; that is to say, if something is created, then it must be created at some time. The time at which the thing is created is thought to be the beginning of the thing, so everything created has a certain beginning.

Gorgias has, at this point, established the following premises.

1. If being is everlasting, then it has no beginning.

2. Everything created has a certain beginning.

From the second premise it follows that:

3. If being is created, then it has a certain beginning.

From what has been stated so far, being as created and being as everlasting conflict with regard to whether they have a beginning. In paragraph sixty-nine, when Gorgias says: "But the everlasting . . .", he seems to expand on premise (1). Gorgias suggests of the everlasting which is rendered uncreated--uncreated because if it always is, then there is not a time at which it was created--that it does not have a beginning. It has no beginning because it always

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[1]Kirk and Raven, The Pre-Socratic Philosophers, #110, p. 114.

was and as uncreated could not begin. One might wonder whether the statement of this is necessary, for is it not just a reiteration of premise (1)? It seems rather that it is an expansion. True, it re-emphasizes the claim that the everlasting has no beginning, but it also introduces the point that the everlasting is uncreated. This talk of uncreated is a consequence of the premise given, but the point was previously unstated. Thus the statement is an elaboration of premise (1), an elaboration which focuses on the conflict between the everlasting and the created in regard to a beginning.

Gorgias's next move is important for a number of reasons. But before discussing these reasons it is appropriate to point out that so far Gorgias has been developing the notions of everlasting on the one hand and created on the other. Gorgias now takes up the everlasting until paragraph seventy-one, at which point he take up the created alternative.

Gorgias draws a further consequence in regard to being: if it does not have a beginning (or in other words being as everlasting) Gorgias claims that it is boundless, <u>apeiron</u>. The reasoning for this is that when a thing has no spatial beginning and spatially goes on forever, the thing is said to be boundless, or on prefers, infinite in size. The argument, understood in this way, fits in with the upcoming discussion where Gorgias begins talking of somewhere and nowhere. Gorgias's previous remarks, however, have not been talking in spatial terms, but rather temporal terms. Thus Gorgias has no legitimate ticket to conclude spatially as he now wants to. He has

slipped from a temporal argument to a spatial one.

But possibly the argument also works temporally. Suppose being does not begin, (there was not a time before which it was not,) yet it (temporally) goes on forever. We would think of being as boundless or, if one prefers, of infinite duration. But does this make us think of being as nowhere or somewhere? It does not seem reasonable to think that because you have been around for a long time that you really are not in anyplace; thus, this interpretation of Gorgias's argument is advised against.

Of Gorgias's argument we are saying that the argument begins as a temporal one and then becomes one which confuses a spatial and temporal sense of "boundless". Clearly, at some point, there is a shift from temporal to spatial. It may occur as late as when Gorgias says "boundless" in "But if it is boundless, then it is nowhere" or as early as when he says "beginning" in "But the everlasting set down as uncreated does not have a beginning". For reasons of satire especially satirizing Melissus, the former is recommended.

Let us consider the importance of the shift from a temporal discussion to a spatial one. Insofar as this is Gorgias's own position, we must hold him to be making the same mistake his predecessors make. When we see Gorgias in the light of the remarks of the PA, that is as one who combines the things said by his forefathers but to a different end (or as one who is riding a manner of philosophising into the ground), then our opinion has to alter. Gorgias, then, does not seem to be one who, as his predecessors, blunders on a particular point, but one who carefully picks up on

their blunders. He shows that even given these mistakes, they cannot argue successfully to the conclusion that they have arrived at. Gorgias's point might be put "I will give you your own misguided confusions, if you like, but even with these you cannot prove the point you try to; rather you must conclude as I have".

Guthrie sees Gorgias toying with Melissus when he says.

> The argument that it (being) cannot be eternal depends on identifying temporal with spatial infinity and then contradicting that what is cannot be infinite. Since Melissus has said that it was, and moreover reached the conclusion by the same confusion of temporal with spatial it seems likely that at this point he is the butt of Gorgias's sophisticated wit.[1]

Our only reservation about Guthrie's remarks is that although we can see that it is likely that the place of confusion is with apeiron--for this makes things follow in the best way and, as well, makes Gorgias's play on Melissus that much stronger--it is still possible that the confusion arises earlier. If the confusion did come earlier on, then it would make Gorgias's argument somewhat less interesting, but we still cannot rule out this possibility.[2]

When it is remembered that Gorgias was one who displayed his talents in the market place, we see that his image as a dialectician would be all the more renowned if he defeated his opponents when he used their assumptions. That undertaking is surely more difficult than pointing out their blunders.

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[1] Guthrie. History of Greek Philosophy, vol. 3, page 197.

[2] That it is difficult to locate exactly where the shift from temporal to spatial arises is more a comment on Melissus than on Gorgias.

We are at the point in the argument where the everlasting (the referent is understood to be being, though the argument is made in a more general form) is without bounds. This lack of bounds, as has been suggested and as we shall see, is a lack of spatial bounds: our subject is infinite in size.

Gorgias claims that the boundless would be nowhere. The argument for this conclusion is another reductio. Gorgias imagines what it would be like if boundless being were somewhere. The suggestion is that if being were somewhere, then being and its container would be different. The container, which apparently is place, surrounds being and as a consequence defines boundaries.[1] The doctrine that what resides in a place has boundaries set out for it is a fairly standard view in pre-Socratic philosophy. Consider Parmenides when he says:

> Abiding in the same place it rests by itself, and so abides firm where it is; for strong necessity holds it firm within the bonds of the limit that keeps it back on every side . . .[2]

The thing that surrounds being, however, is larger than being, but being as unbounded has nothing larger to surround it. That there is something larger, the container, comes from the assumption that being has a place. Thus Gorgias suggests that it does not have a place,

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[1]Here one might expect Gorgias to say that the position of his opponents holds the boundless, on the assumption of place, to be bounded. However, he does not take this tact, but carries the argument a step further.

[2]Kirk and Raven, The Pre-Socratic Philosophers, #350, p. 276.

from which it follows that being is nowhere.[1]

An observation about part of the argument is in order. The argument purports to show that being, if unbounded, can be no place. If, however, this section is correct, its consequences are even more staggering. The argument does not depend on the characteristics of being, but only on the unbounded. As such, the argument, if correct, could be generalized to prove that any unbounded could be in no place. Some physicists would not be amused.

We need to ask ourselves whether or not we are persuaded by Gorgias's argument to the effect that the everlasting is nowhere. Clearly the first objection is the shift from temporal to spatial considerations. This mistake is obvious; no more needs to be said concerning it. The next problem we need concern ourselves with is how convinced are we that the boundless can be in no place? There are a couple of objections that need to be raised about the argument. One way to challenge Gorgias's argument is by seeing whether place and container bind. The other way is to ask even if place and container do bind, does it follow that it would be in no place?[2]

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[1]There is another way one might want to take the last few remarks. What we called the "step further" in Footnote 1, page 106 might be construed as the reason why the unbounded and bounded conflict. This would then be to see Gorgias pointing out the contradiction between unbounded and bounded. But this interpretation is wrong for two reasons. Firstly, Gorgias does not mention the unbounded/bounded contradiction. And if he were interested in this he would not need to justify the point with a "larger" argument. The conflict is inherent. Secondly, the "larger" argument does not really propel the unbounded/bounded conflict any further.

[2]Although these two questions have been separated they will be considered together.

If we can argue that that which is somewhere need not have a container, then we can escape the problem by not having anything larger or binding being. Suppose for example there is a monkey, (something) in the room (someplace). Is there a container for the monkey? Well, one might say that the room is the container. Next put the monkey in a field. Is there a container for him there? One might reply[1] that although the notion of container does not seem quite appropriate here, there is a surrounder nevertheless. If nothing else, the place he occupies plus a bit surrounds him. This surrounder, taking the point back to Gorgias's argument, is all that Gorgias needs. One's intuitions suggest that place is not a surrounder (but let us let that pass for a moment: we will return to it later). We have some idea of what our Gorgian opponent will use as a reply. So far we have not been able to overthrow him. We have shown that the notion of a container was not adequate, but his defense was that a surrounder was all he needed. The first round seems his. Let us take the specific case of the unbounded and see whether or not we can pose a problem for Gorgias here.

Let us imagine we are on something unbounded. It goes on and on and on . . . Now, in order for the Gorgian to show that there is a surrounder, the thing has to stop. If it does not stop going on, it is hard to see how we could ever have something that surrounds

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[1]One might say this, but if one did, one would be wrong. This will become clear when we discuss "on" and "from". However, for the purposes of exploring Gorgias, here we will assume that one can correctly say this.

this unbounded thing. Remember the claim is that it does go on and on . . . Furthermore, a claim that our capabilities are limited and hence we cannot find the surrounder, though it must still exist, will not do. The point was that the unbounded goes on and on and on. Taken seriously this must exclude a surrounder. Faith in a surrounder will not heal the argument. A reply might be that if it goes on and on, it is not truly in a place; however, this is not a good reply since the thing is here, there and everywhere. A further ploy that it must be in some one place does violence to the original hypothesis since Gorgias from finding the thing in no place, concludes that it does not exist. A point that it is not in some one place, but in many, does not allow a ticket to the conclusion that the thing does not exist. From these considerations we conclude that we have a way to defeat the argument that the unbounded has no place. Physicists may be relieved.

A second way to deal with the Gorgian opponent is to imagine once again the unbounded going on and on, but this time to grant that it ends. (Properly speaking we should not allow this, but here we do so in order to further examine the position.) In this case it would be suggested that the thing was bounded. We now ask what is on the other side of the object. "Nothing" must be the reply since we know that this, the unbounded, is the thing that exists: there are no others. Thus nothing is what surrounds the unbounded; but that will not do, for nothing is not a something that can surround--recall our "not" and "non" and "nothing" discussions. Hence on this way of viewing the issue we must conclude that there is not a surrounder of the unbounded.

The problem that we have been dealing with has been the attempt to imagine something being somewhere without being surrounded. The above arguments support the conclusion that something can be somewhere without being surrounded. These arguments although trying to argue against Gorgias and accomplishing that end, have in a sense been playing along with Gorgias. We have been arguing with Gorgias on his ground. We need not do only this. It seems clear that we can say where something is in a number of ways. Only one way involves the notion of container or binder. That way is the use of "in" in for example: "She is in the room." As well as this, we can say where something is by using "on" and "from". Take for example; "it is hanging from the ceiling" or "It is on the desk". In neither of these cases does the notion of container apply. Thus we see that Gorgias's considerations on saying where something is are superficial.

Our arguments have attempted to examine Gorgias's notion of something being unbounded and having a surrounder. Gorgias suggests that problems arise from this such that we have to conclude that the thing does not exist. We suggest that the unbounded does not need a surrounder, that things in general do not need a surrounder and that were there a furthest limit to the unbounded there would not therefore be a thing that is larger than it. It must be clearly pointed out, however, that the tradition within which Gorgias was working felt that the unbounded did have a surrounder and they saw no problem in this. Parmenides says:

> it is without beginning and end . . . strong necessity holds it firm within the bounds of limit that keep it back on every side.[1]

He also says:

> But since there is a furthest limit, it is bounded on every side . . .[2]

We hope we have shown that such a view is not adequate.

Since the above arguments are not sufficient to show that there is a surrounder for the unbounded, we need not conclude that there is something greater and binding the unbounded. The absurdity which Gorgias suggests arises from the hypothesis of place, does not, then, arise.

A completely different way of dealing with Gorgias is by considering the argument in terms of a linguistic analysis of the key terms employed in the argument.[3] We might say, for instance, that paint--"paint" is a T-expression--surrounds a certain object, however, the color--"color" is a U-word--does not surround (although the paint of a certain color does). Similarly, we might think that the army--"army" is a T-expression--surrounds the enemy, however, the magnitude--"magnitude" is a U-word--does not (though the army of a certain magnitude, number and so forth does). Thus it goes with the distinction between U-words and T-expressions; in accordance with this,

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[1] Kirk and Raven, The Pre-Socratic Philosophers, #350, p. 276.

[2] Kirk and Raven, The Pre-Socratic Philosophers, #351, p. 276.

[3] We use the U-word and T-expression distinction drawn on page 61-67 of this thesis.

positing place alone will not do--"place" is a U-word. It cannot surround. Thus we do not get the problem of a surrounder of the unbounded until Gorgias offers us something to do the surrounding. This, however, cannot be place.

We are now, in various ways, protected from thinking that the unbounded cannot be in anyplace. The Gorgian position has been driven to claim that place and nothing are surrounders. Neither will do; thus the problem generated by Gorgias has been dismantled.

Gorgias now takes us back a step or two so he can fend off objections to the last argument. When it was suggested that being was some place, Gorgias said that the surrounder, place, in order to surround would be larger than the surrounded. He here, in paragraph seventy, entertains the possibility that the surrounder of being is being itself and not something different. Presumably Gorgias is defending himself from the following type of reply: being surrounds itself and as such the container and the contained are the same; since they are the same there is now no surrounder or container larger than the boundless. We are prevented from the difficulty of holding to the contradiction of having a larger than the boundless and hence the assumption of a place does not need to be abandoned.

Gorgias's argument against the view that unbounded being surrounds itself is to point out that the container and the contained will be the same. If this is so, being would be two things, both place (container) and body (the contained). This, however, is felt to be absurd. Once again, the reasons for the absurdity are taken to

be obvious. The point is, one supposes, that one and the same thing is said to be two different things. To hold that the body is the place is surely absurd. Thus this anticipated objection to Gorgias's argument is not good; for it rests on a confusion.

An interesting feature is that in his reply to the anticipated objection Gorgias is breaking away from the Parmenidean belief that since there is a furthest limit, the thing is bounded on every side. This is the very view Gorgias seemed to be relying on in the previous argument.

Gorgias by arguing against the idea of a thing surrounding itself appears to take the correct position. We might speak of someone being surrounded in his own misery, but that is not helpful since it is but a figure of speech and in any case, it is the misery that does the surrounding. The person is not surrounded by himself. The closest one can come to surrounding oneself is the notion of a self-contained unit. There is the example of a camper's pot set, but even here we cannot properly say that the pots surround themselves; rather, we must speak of the set as not requiring a container. It is even more obvious that the identification of place and body will not do. That is to identify a what with a where. Gorgias is right in maintaining a position that keeps these two separate.

Although we find that we agree with the conclusions of the last argument, there remains much to disagree with. A difficulty involved with this argument is Gorgias's assumption that container is place. In the previous argument we used the distinction between U-words and T-expressions in order to show some errors in Gorgias's

thinking. The problem arises here again. The container ("container" is a T-expression) is not a place ("place" is a U-word). Thus such an identification will not do.[1]

The point we have reached now, in the middle of seventy, has brought us to the conclusion that unbounded being is found to be in no place. Gorgias now goes back and summarizes his progress so far on everlasting being: "therefore if being is everlasting, it is unbounded. But if it is unbounded, it is nowhere." This much we have already seen, but now we come to an important step. Gorgias says: "But if it is nowhere, it does not exist." This is followed by a summary of this part of the argument. He says: "So if being is everlasting, it is not even being to begin with."

The reason for the claim that that which is nowhere does not exist is thought to be apparent. Supposedly we see it on analogy with looking for something. If you cannot find it and have looked in everyplace and have not been deceived by appearances, then one concludes that thing does not exist. This reasoning only works if being is understood by means of a physical model.[2]

Understanding the issue by means of a physical model seems to be legitimate. Since it is clear that Gorgias is taking his subject from his predecessors it seems reasonable that being would

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[1] This objection is an objection to the role assigned to place by both Gorgias and his critics.

[2] Quite clearly this is one of the places where "being" has to be understood as a T-expression.

have the properties that Parmenides and Melissus ascribe to it.[1] Gorgias,thus, can understand being as if it were a thing that had a place. If it turns out that it cannot have a place, then the claim that being exists, is incorrect.[2]

Gorgias has eliminated one of the three alternatives for being, if it is going to be said to exist. At paragraph seventy-one he again takes up the second alternative which is that being is created. (Earlier arguments showed that whatever is created has a beginning). The argument against the existence of created being is much shorter and quite clever. It also gets us away from the spatial/temporal shifts.

We are to imagine the creation of being. Gorgias asks us if being is created, then what is it created out of? Here such a question seems appropriate. Of a certain thing one might ask what it is created out of. Finding the answer to that, one again may ask what it is made of, and so on. To carry on such a project continually is to go on too long. One cannot keep up the project indefinitely. However, Gorgias does not seem to be guilty of this mistake. He is considering the hypothesis that being is created. Since it is said to be created, it is fair to ask out of what it is created--although it may not be fair to ask of the materials from

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[1] See fragment 8 of Parmenides and fragments 2 through 6 of Melissus.

[2] The argument that what is nowhere does not exist is reminiscent of Zeno's argument that what has no size does not exist. What sort of relation there may or may not be is unclear; therefore this point must be mentioned and then passed over.

which being is created what they themselves are created out of. A designer having created a new dress could go on to reveal out of what he made that dress. To ask him to do so would not be unfair. Similarly it is not unfair to ask from what created being is made.

Two sources are offered as the materials from which created being is made. They are being and non-being.[1] We should consider what these alternatives amount to. This does not require new arguments but a reliance on old ones. The non-being alternative fails since "non" is not a name. With creation out of being we have the problem of a lack of clarity, on Gorgias's part, regarding just what being is. Other than this, however, there do not seem to be further difficulties. The idea of creating being out of being may seem to have the absurdities of self-predication, but it does not. In fact, the notion seems fairly reasonable; take, for example, parents creating their children.

Gorgias first considers the creation of being out of being. If being were to be created out of itself, then being would not be created. It would not be created, for in order to explain its creation we already assume its existence. Thus Gorgias shows that those who explain the creation of being in terms of being are holding a circular position. They presuppose what it is that they would explain. Gorgias's arguments point to the fact that the best one could do with this sort of position is to explain alteration but

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[1]It is atypical of Gorgias not to consider the combination of the two. As far as drawing a conclusion, this loss does not seem serious, yet it is puzzling that he does not have a third alternative.

not generation.

Although the idea of parents begetting children makes the notion of creation out of self intelligible, it is not adequate for Gorgias. The begetting version of the argument would require that $being_1$, the child, be created by $being_2$, the parents. Gorgias, however, wants to use "being" in the same sense. The relation between parent and child will not help us with this. If it aids our understanding we might see Gorgias not to be asking about the creation of this or that man but asking about the creation of the first man, Adam. What is he created from?

The argument next takes up the attempt to explain the creation of being out of non-being. This attempt is also unsuccessful. Non-being is not able to create. For in asking being to be created out of non-being we are asking non-being to create. But Gorgias feels a creator needs to exist if it is to create--to bake a cake out of non-existent ingredients would be, to say the least, very difficult. Thus non-being like the non-existent ingredients can not be the generator of anything.

This argument would seem to be successful if we are willing to allow that non-being does not exist. Gorgias now can rely on us holding that non-being does not exist, since his first set of arguments were designed to prove this. Were the present argument offered before he showed non-being did not exist, this argument would persuade few except those who made Parmenides's mistake of confusing the role of name and saying whether something exists. As it is, however, all (including the atomist) should be persuaded.

Greek myths and much of Greek philosophising are not concerned with the question of where the original "stuff" of the universe came from. Gorgias stands out as a thinker, if for no other reason than that he asks that question. With his argument about being as created, Gorgias discovers that there could be no being, no "stuff" of the universe.

Gorgias has rejected the view that being is created. It is interesting that the argument can be generalized into an argument against creation and not just against being as created. This is similar to the way in which his argument against boundless being could be expanded into an argument against the boundless.

The third and final option that Gorgias has offered for the existence of being is that being is both everlasting and created. Earlier we attempted to explain this, but found that we could not adequately discover what was meant. By examining Gorgias's argument we hope to come to understand what is meant by "created and everlasting".

The argument that these two notions are incompatable is given in seventy-two. For if being is everlasting, it is not created and vice versa. That Gorgias draws such a conclusion should not be surprising to us. When Gorgias set up the problem the two were thought to be exclusive of each other. Recall our earlier remarks that a created thing is created at a time, but an everlasting thing must always be, encompass all time. With a created

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*The remarks in quotation marks are to be seen as metaphors at best.

thing there is a time before which it is created; this is not so for an everlasting thing. As we saw earlier and as Gorgias now suggests the two are incompatable. Our work and his lead to the same conclusion.

We might draw a distinction between laying out an option and discovering whether that option is "true to reality" or "fits the facts".* In offering our views, we may go wrong in at least two ways. If we set out to give an option we may fail because the alternative makes no sense, is incoherent, is self-contradictory and so forth. Alternatively, we may succeed in laying out the option and then find that it does not "fit the facts". In this latter case, the option remains an option but is said to be false.

Gorgias in the last argument fails to respect this distinction. He treats the failure to give an option as if it were an example of failing to "fit the facts". Since the third alternative turned out to be self-contradictory Gorgias should have rejected this as an alternative instead of acting as if it were an alternative that happened to be wrong. Rather than offering three alternatives and finding errors with each Gorgias should have done this with two but found one of the hypothesized options not to be an alternative at all.

Gorgias launched his attack on the existence of being by suggesting three things, one of which must be the case if being is to

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*The remarks in quotation marks are to be seen as metaphors at best.

exist. He has now argued against the three alternatives. Gorgias thus draws the conclusion that being does not exist.

The version of the argument that PA gives us contains some differences although none are of great importance. Again, the argument is of a more general form so that it is not an argument against being, but an argument against anything.[1] Here the argument does not have three options of created, everlasting and both created and everlasting; rather there are only two alternatives: created and uncreated. Since with SE's version the third alternative was not an alternative at all, one suspects that PA or someone else has eliminated that which is not strictly necessary. Removing the argument is not particularly harmful although one likes to see all of Gorgias's considerations.[2] Also omitted in this account of the argument are the moves from uncreated to being boundless; the reader is referred to Melissus. Again, the loss of this is not terribly important though it becomes clear that what we are seeing with SE is closer to the full argument. The argument that what is nowhere does not exist is here said to be similar to Zeno's argument about space.

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[1]The arguments are seen by PA to be of a more general nature. That view of things is attractive insofar as in that case the arguments apply to a larger class of things. However, the more general application of arguments is unattractive insofar as the tripart distinction gives the thesis more sophistication and it fits better in its historical context.

[2]That SE's account is more complete leads one to believe that it is a better account.

What argument is being referred to is not at all clear. The conclusion of this half of the argument (the half dealing with the uncreated) is not that there can not be anything uncreated, but quite surprisingly, that being is not created. This conclusion does not follow from anything said; and that this is the conclusion forces the point that the argument of SE is the more accurate and that generally PA misrepresents Gorgias when he records the arguments as directed at ti. We conclude that the uncreated argument should be cast as SE has cast it, namely as an argument against being.

Both manuscripts agree on why nothing is created out of being. The version of PA has a more sophisticated argument for why there is no creation from non-being. SE's argument suggests that things do not come from non-being because non-being does not exist. PA's argument suggests that things do not come from non-being if non-being does not exist because what does not exist can not create (nothing from nothing). However, if non-being does exist still things can not come from it (as with being) for that would not explain generation, but only alteration. This version of the argument is somewhat more complex and rewarding. One suspects in this case it is SE who has been superficial.

b) The One/Many Argument

We have studied Gorgias's first argument against the existence of being. At paragraph seventy-three SE records an argument against being using the notion of one/many.[1] The assumption granted

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[1]We will not need to consider PA's version of the argument. The text is too corrupt.

for the sake of performing the reductio is that being exists; assuming that, Gorgias inquires whether it would be one or many.

In his Philebus (at 14d through 16b) Plato mentions that trying to decide whether a thing is one or many is child's quibbling. Plato feels that the appropriate way to talk is to speak to one man having many parts, for example. Plato seems to present a solution to the problem by claiming that the problem is a pseudo-problem. We are here concerned with Plato's so-called pseudo-problem.

Zeno is generally considered to be the first person to record an argument concerning the one and the many. Plato in his Parmenides sees Zeno as endeavoring to show that by their doctrine the pluralists end up in hopeless contradictions. This attack on pluralism is a defense of monism, specifically Parmenides, in the positing of a one.

Gorgias's argument goes in a different direction: he hopes to argue against both a one and a many so that we need to abandon the view that anything exists. Gorgias's argument is close to what Eudemus is thought to have said about Zeno.

> As Eudemus . . . records Zeno . . . used to try to prove that it is impossible that existing things should be a plurality by arguing that there is no unit in existing things and that plurality is a sum of units.[1]

Gorgias's argument differs from the above argument in that Gorgias concludes that in no way can there be a one. In Eudemus

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[1]Kirk & Raven, The Pre-Socratic Philosophers, #367, page 290.

it is only held that there is no unit in existing things.

On the assumption of being Gorgias's reductio argues that it must be one or many. These alternatives are seen to be exclusive of each other and exhaustive. Gorgias then denies that being is one or many. If this is the case, then the assumption that being exists must be given up. The assumption of being must lead to one of the two consequences offered. Since neither of the consequences turns out to be the case the assumptions backing the alternatives up must be given up.[1]

Before examining the details of the argument, let us examine the form of the argument. Already we have mentioned Plato's criticisms of the one/many argument. It seems correct to hold that there is no need to see the two as exclusive of each other. Whether we say it is one or many or both seems to do with our interests when examining the subject rather than any inherent properties of oneness or manyness in the subject. Ignoring this as a criticism, there seems a serious problem with the conclusion drawn in the argument. Gorgias feels that the conclusion should be that being does not exist. But rather than concluding in that radical way why do we not draw a more moderate conclusion such as being cannot be characterized as one or many, or that we have not yet offered a correct characterization of being?

Gorgias's one/many argument could draw the conclusion it

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[1]It should be pointed out that the argument here depends on "being" being seen as some sort of T-expression.

does draw if it argued that:

(1) If being exists, it is one or many.
(2) But, indeed, it is neither one nor many; for when one examines the relevant phenomena they are neither one nor many.
(3) Being does not exist.

What bears emphasis in the above argument is the examination in step (2). Here an imagined examiner has checked the phenomena, which could have been one or could have been many. In this instance, it turns out to be neither of these but something other. Nevertheless, it remains possible for the phenomena examined to be one or many. In the argument Gorgias has given, the second premise is not like this. For Gorgias's argument does not hold that the relevant phenomena are neither one nor many, but that there is no possibility (it is conceptually impossible) for the phenomena to be one or many. Since this is what he argues, Gorgias's remarks reflect not on whether being exists or not, but on the analysis of being. Thus his argument only proves (if anything) that the concept of being that he has offerred is not adequate and not that being does not exist.

Let us consider a vulgar example that will help to illustrate the point. Suppose we argue in the following manner:

(1) If it is a car, then it is green or white.
(2) But it is not green or white.

From here we could conclude that it is not a car. However, should the second premise be that there was no such thing as the colors green and white, then one would not think that there was no car (although there might not be one) but rather one would think that the characterization of a car as the sort of thing that is green or white is inadequate.

Gorgias has not just ruled out the possibility that something that could be one or many is one or many, but has ruled out that the thing could ever be one or many. Thus the argument does not show that being does not exist, but that being is not the sort of thing that can be one or many.

Having considered these objections to the way the argument is set up, let us turn to the details of the argument.

Being as one is considered first. To consider this alternative Gorgias sets up another reductio. Gorgias argues that if being is one, then it must have one of the following properties: a certain quantity, continuous, a magnitude, or body. It has, however, none of these, for these are all divisible. Therefore it is not one. Thus the reductio on being as one, which is part of the reductio on being is completed.

The alternatives for being as one are thought to be exhaustive. Are they? Obviously they are not exhaustive when an other than physical interpretation is given to being. That is to say, if being is a concept, or a metaphysical entity (whatever that may be), then the argument will not work. When, however, the argument is seen in a tradition along with Parmenides and especially Melissus, then the object is thought to be physical: hence the alternatives seem exhaustive.

Gorgias is using our knowledge that physical objects are divisible to argue against the one. The acceptance of this would be very easy for a Greek, for they had already had Zeno tell them not just that physical things were divisible but that they were in-

finitely divisible. Gorgias simply argues that something is divisible and thus more than one.

Some of the steps of Gorgias's argument bear some more pondering. We have suggested that the alternatives seem exhaustive but let us look closer. When Gorgias talks of the continuous or a quality or a magnitude being divided is he correct? Is it these that are divided or is it rather the continuous thing or a thing of a certain quantity, or something of a certain magnitude? One reads that it is the former that are to be divided, but suspects that only the latter can be divided. The issue can also be put this way: Has Gorgias really given us more than one option? For is it not the body that is divided? Gorgias's argument, however, is amenable to alteration. Given that he takes being to be a body, it is appropriate that only body needs to be divided. Our point here is to make clear what is being divided and to show why Gorgias's argument, as it stands now, is somewhat misleading. For at present we have an odd conglomeration of universals and bodies that are to be divided.

Concerning this issue of whether Gorgias is really just dividing body and yet offering some universals such that it appears he is offering different alternatives, it seems likely that he has confused the issue. Gorgias has not separated the two at all, yet his position is open to being construed as dividing bodies and thus the argument can be saved from the above difficulty.

Gorgias has attempted to show us, that being can not be any of the alternatives he has offered. But to claim that being, when considered one, is none of these, is surely absurd. Thus Gorgias con-

cludes that being is not one. Gorgias here has completed on half of this reductio on being.

Next, Gorgias seeks to complete his reductio on being by attacking the thesis that being is many. This he does by suggesting that the many must be made up of ones. Gorgias, here seems to have learned from Melissus's claim that: "If there were a plurality, things would have to be the same kind as I say the one is".[1] So, if there are no ones there can be no many. There is nothing to make the many out of.

There is a slight problem in knowing whether Gorgias hopes to argue that being (one thing) can not be made out of many parts, or whether he hopes to argue that there cannot be many things. That is, it is unclear whether the hypothesis is that being is many things, or that there are many parts that constitute being. If the argument is the latter, then one might argue that as an army can be made up of many soldiers--something other than army--so being might be thought to be made up of something other than being. Thus Gorgias's initial argument, directed against being as one, is not relevant, for the parts here are not being at all. Such a counter only forestalls Gorgias's argument. He now would only need re-work his argument against being as one so that it is applicable to whatever you say the ones, the parts, are (since these parts are said to be something other than being). In this interpretation, Gorgias's

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[1]Kirk & Raven, The Pre-Socratic Philosophers, #392, p. 304.

argument as given is not adequate, but can be easily adjusted to be adequate. In the former interpretation that there are not many beings because there is not even one being to make up the many, we should say that given this way of viewing the problem the argument works. One can begin to escape Gorgias's conclusions only if one does not look for a one and many as parts or things in the world.

The criticisms to be directed at the one/many argument fall in line with Plato's. Plato is right in pointing out that the same thing can be seen as one or many. If one gets away from the notion that one and many are things that inhere in the object and instead moves to the view that we see this as one or many depending on our interests, circumstances, and so on, then one removes oneself from the difficulties that Gorgias has suggested.

The force of the last sentence in seventy-four, "But that neither being nor non-being exists is manifest from this", might be somewhat misleading. One might suppose it means that the one/many argument applies to both being and non-being. However, if that were the point of this comment, then Gorgias has been quite vague. After all, in giving the argument he mentions only being. Furthermore, if Gorgias meant the one/many argument to apply to being and also non-being, then we would wonder why Gorgias did not also include being and non-being. Surely it would not have been any less appropriate than either being or non-being. Furthermore, why, if the argument is also to apply to non-being, is the argument found in the section on being?

Fortunately, there is a better way of understanding the last

sentence in seventy-four. If we view the statement not as drawing a conclusion in reference to the one/many argument, but rather as making the more general point that the arguer has now effectively eliminated two of the three options originally offered, then we are relieved of the difficulties of vagueness and lack of inclusion of the third option. This is to say that the statement we are now considering does not refer to the argument completed in seventy-four but rather it sums up the progress made with all the arguments so far introduced.

The manuscript of PA introduces an argument (980a1-8) that is not seen in the text of SE. This argument holds that nothing can be moved, and motion must mean that the thing does not exist. Untersteiner in his analysis of Gorgias has suggested that it is likely that there was another argument which held that neither could it be unmoved.[1] This would make Gorgias claim that things could neither be moved nor unmoved. Presumably, as with the one/many argument, this would allow one to conclude that nothing existed. Untersteiner's point is well taken; hence it is appropriate to conclude that we have only one half of the argument recorded.

The first argument is that if something moves, it no longer would be in the same condition it was in. Motion seems to imply change. Change means that being comes to be non-being and non-being comes to be. An underwritten assumption is that things

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[1]Untersteiner, M. The Sophists, p. 150.

changing from what they are to something else is impossible because they are what they are and not something else. Thus things cannot move, they must be and remain what they are. Without this underwritten assumption it would have been appropriate to conclude panta rei rather than that nothing can move.

The argument gets its force from the move from motion to no-longer-in-the-same-condition. And from there the argument moves to things (being and non-being) no longer being the same thing. Of something moving, it would seem to be stretching a point to say that it is no longer in the same condition it was in. I move my pencil and it seems to be in the same condition, though clearly it is not in the same place. If in moving my pencil I break the lead, or chip the wood, or damage the eraser, then it would be appropriate to speak of it no longer being in the same condition. Movement itself, however, does not seem to require our speaking of a thing no longer being in the same condition. Having suggested this criticism, let us allow that point to pass.

Let us suppose that moving a thing is to alter its condition, just as breaking the lead is. If the thing moves and if we say the condition is altered, do we then move to conclude that it is no longer the same thing? Clearly not. The pencil, though no longer in the same condition, remains a pencil. Damaged it may be, but, nevertheless, it is a pencil. Here there is room to speak of accidental versus essential characteristics being changed. We see that there is no reason to move to concluding that non-being would come to be or that being would be non-being. There is no legitimate

move from motion to no-longer-in-the-same-condition and from that point there is no move to the suggestion that it is no longer itself. Thus we prevent from arising the impossible situation in which things are no longer what they are. In doing this we stop the first argument against motion.

We need to say something more about Gorgias's shift from the same condition to not being the same thing. This is a problem with which Gorgias has considerable difficulty (as we will see when we examine the arguments against being and non-being). Had Gorgias been clear that there is a considerable difference from saying something like "This is not the same thing I wore yesterday" and "This book is not in the same condition it was yesterday" the problems that do arise would not have arisen. In the first sentence we are doubting that the subject is what we had identified earlier. In the second sentence, we speak of an "aspect" of the object as having altered, but from this we cannot conclude that it is not the same object, rather we speak of the color of the object (or something like this) being different. The issue of whether or not it is the same subject does not even arise. Gorgias's discussion about the movement of being and non-being is similar to our example. We speak of the subject having altered its position. But here we ought not (on analogy with our example) conclude that it is not the same subject, rather we speak of the position of the subject being different. But what has been done by Gorgias is to have considered a case of the second sort (considered an "aspect") but, then, drawn a conclusion of the first sort (concluded that the thing is different). Yet it is

clear that as there is no need nor license for moving from the change of color to concluding that the thing is not the same thing, so there is no room to move from the motion of a thing to the thing not being the same thing.

The second argument Gorgias gives against motion depends on division. At first glance, it is not apparent why motion involves division. One can, however, imagine a case where it does. If we take an orange and move a part of it, then we need division in order to have motion. Gorgias suggests that at the point at which a thing is divided the thing no longer exists.[1] It is as if, in dividing the orange so that part of it can move, a segment goes out of existence. What applies to the part applies to the whole so that when the whole orange is moved, all the parts are divided and hence the whole orange goes out of existence. Hence if a thing moves, then it does not exist. Thus the thing cannot be moved.

This argument is quite obviously sophistical. The move from parts to whole is quite inappropriate. Even though we might allow that some cases of motion require separation, there is no need to think that all cases of motion require separation. If I pick up the whole thing and lift it, it is quite obvious that there is no division. Similarly there is no need to think of a sphere spinning as involving separation. That conception (a sphere spinning) was quite familiar to Gorgias *via* Parmenides remarks on being. Even if one were to

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[1] PA attributes this move to Leucippus. Again, Gorgias is depending on the work of his predecessors.

get one's ideas of motion from division, it is not apparent why one would suspect that moving the orange would completely divide it. If one divides an orange in two and then moves both halves, one moves everything to be moved without dividing the thing completely. In addition to these criticisms Gorgias was wrong in the first place when he accepted Leucippus's point that division involves something going out of existence. After all, in cutting an orange in half the weight is not diminished. Division might involve the diminishing of the thing if one used a laser beam (as conceived in the comic books) but that hypothesis is unnecessary and unlikely. We find ourselves not being persuaded in the least by Gorgias's argument.

Thus ends the discussion of Gorgias's argument against motion. As has been suggested, it is suspected that there is another argument arguing that things cannot be unmoved, however, that argument we do not have.

6) Being and Non-Being do not Exist

At seventy-five Gorgias begins to consider the last of the three alternatives that something could be if it were to exist. Gorgias naturally has to consider the being and non-being hypothesis because it is in the tradition from Parmenides as an alternative. Perhaps one reason that this is seen as a serious alternative in the first place is that this route seems to be in line with Anaxagoras's view that everything is in everything.

Gorgias argues that if both exist, then they must be the same

with respect to existence.[1] The above move is to have changed talking about whether the two things exist to claiming that there is something, namely existence, which they are the same in respect of. Earlier we argued that the treating of existence as a property or, what is worse, something that was applied is ill conceived. There is not a tree and also something else, existence, that, when applied, makes the tree come to be. Because speaking in this manner is confused we hold that to talk of the same in respect of existence, is not appropriate. We thereby prevent the progress of the argument.

For the sake of examining the argument, let us put aside this objection and talk as if "the same in respect of existence" did make sense.

After claiming that they are the same in respect of existence, Gorgias claims that thus neither exist. This conclusion is arrived at by holding that it is obvious that non-being does not exist. Thus since the two are said to be the same in the respect of existence, then it also must be the case that being does not exist. Thus both do not exist.

But, to revive a by now old point, how can Gorgias suggest that non-being does not exist? If he hopes it is obvious because of the nature of non-being, it is not. Another way Gorgias might expect that we should conclude that non-being does not exist is by our knowledge of the arguments he gave in the section on non-being.

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[1] In the argument Gorgias quite clearly distinguishes the use of the articular participle and the articular infinitive. With the former we refer to the subject of discussion, with the latter we attribute something (existence) to the subject.

Neither of these ways is satisfactory. The argument via the nature of non-being we have exposed and held that Gorgias must also be aware of (otherwise his arguments against non-being would be superfluous). The dependency on the previously given arguments against non-being will not work; (1) because we have shown these arguments in error, (2) because then the third section would then not be offering anything new, but Gorgias takes himself to be giving new arguments. Thus in using either of these ways to prove his point, Gorgias fails to give an adequate justification for the belief that non-being does not exist.

PA criticizes a similar argument in the following manner. If the two are said to be the same with respect to existence and since we know that being exists, then we must conclude that both exist. The argument, then, can be taken to lead to either of two opposite conclusions. Such an argument must be in error and hence is insufficient to the task of showing that the combination of being and non-being cannot exist. The argument then fails because: (a) it treats existence as a property, (b) it does not adequately prove the non-existence of non-being, and (c) it fails to appreciate the point that the argument can be taken in either of two opposed directions.

In seventy-six Gorgias presents his second, and last argument against the existence of being and non-being. In the previous argument Gorgias argued from the assumption that being and non-being are the same in respect of existence. Here the argument begins from the idea that being and non-being are the same. One has no legitimate ticket to move from the same in a certain respect to

being the same, but Gorgias makes that move. As we showed in an earlier argument, Gorgias is not all aware of an accidental versus essential distinction: hence we must bring that point to bear here. Yet the error of the argument is even more glaring than ignoring the accidental/essential distinction, for Gorgias moves from the same in one respect to the same in all respects. One might try to defend Gorgias by suggesting that for some reason things that are said to exist must be said to be the same. There is, however, no reason at all to think that this tree and that cane are the same. The most that one might think is that they are the same in respect of existence. Our remarks re-introduce the point that Gorgias is making a dramatic jump from the same in a certain respect to identical.

The point that Gorgias goes on to make is that even were they the same, they would not both exist. The first argument for this is that if both exist, then they cannot be the same, for we still speak of a both and this, the word "both", must indicate some difference. The hypothesis was that they had to be the same for both to exist. That they are not the same, then, indicates that they both do not exist, though one may. The second argument is that were these the same, then there is not a both to speak about and if there is not a both to speak about, then this is no longer the third hypothesis. In other words if there is no longer a both, then there can not be a both that exist.

One might want to see this latter argument in the following way. Suppose I suggest that this is the same pen I used yesterday. We do not then have two pens, yesterday's and today's. Rather there

is a pen which was used on two occasions. If being, then, is the same as non-being there are not two things, not both. If there is not both, then there are not two things that can be said to exist. Thus the third alternative does not work. Apart from the error of the hypothesis that they are the same, if both are to exist, the arguments are interesting. The second argument that two things if said to be the same (meaning the same in all respects) cannot be two things seems correct.[1] This points out the importance of the respect which things are said to be the same or identical. The first argument, however, is not compelling; for we do not take the fact that both exist in any way to force the point of identity.

Gorgias has now argued against the three options (being, non-being, being and non-being) he initially offered. He has rejected each of them. Since there were no other options that could be thought of, Gorgias concludes that the hypothesis that something exists must be rejected. We are then forced to conclude that nothing exists. The success of the argument depends on the initial set-up of the argument and the intervening steps. We have shown why the set-up of the hypothesis is faulty as well as the problems with each individual argument.

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[1]This assumes that we are speaking of particulars that are said to be the same and not a genus such that they are said of the same thing.

Chapter Three: It Cannot Be Thought

Gorgias, for the sake of argument, now considers the problems that could arise if there were something. Gorgias seems to have more than one goal in mind. The first aim is to enhance the reductio on those who imagine that there is something. This lends support to his conclusions that nothing exists; by allowing the position he has argued against, Gorgias draws conclusions that are absurd thus showing the position to be absurd. The second aim is to draw the conclusion that we cannot think about or speak about anything.

What the scope of the second and third sections of his work is to be presents a problem. In the first section Gorgias was seen to be arguing against the view that anything existed. In the second and third sections it is not perfectly clear whether he means to show that being cannot be thought or spoken about or that anything cannot be thought or spoken about. I will argue that Gorgias embraces both conclusions for they come to be seen as equivalent. This argument will depend on a relation between "being" and "beings".

The conclusion of the first argument in the second section is that being is not thought about. With this conclusion, Gorgias seems to have narrowed his target to being, yet, as we shall see Gorgias also argues (premise (1) (a)) concerning beings and not being being thought. As well, his initial hypothesis is that if anything exists, it cannot be considered. Thus we can see that the target of Gorgias's argument is, on the one hand, that being can not

be thought about, and, on the other hand, that nothing can be thought about since beings can not be thought.

It seems perfectly clear that there are both these threads of thought in this work. So what are we to say of the argument? The claim that does the most damage to Gorgias is to say that he has both projects in mind and does not adequately distinguish between the two projects. The claim that does the least harm to Gorgias is to say that the two projects are complementary. In this case "being" is a T-expression that is a name for all the beings. This is to be seen on analogy with "hair" and "hairs".[1] In this case, showing that being cannot be thought is to show that all things cannot be thought, and showing that all beings cannot be thought is to show that being cannot be thought.[2]

A different problem is the manner in which we are to understand the hypothesis that even if something should exist, it would be unknowable and inconceivable to a man. Loenen argues that the apparent position of Gorgias must be reinterpreted because, as it is classically taken, Gorgias is holding a contradictory view. The impact of his remarks is to discredit the most obvious interpretation of Gorgias. Loenen says "Indeed if one first grants that something actually exists, one can hardly argue that it cannot be known to

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[1]When one gets a haircut, all the hairs are cut.

[2]This issue will be discussed at various points throughout the rest of this thesis.

exist".[1] Loenen's argument does not seem to be very persuasive. Indeed, there seems to be little reason to move from this part of the classical position to what he suggests.

One might well grant, for example, that John is in the room, but hold that one could not know it because he has had a face lift, is very quiet, is hiding where one would never suspect and so forth. Allowing that something is the case but that it is unknowable does not seem a contradiction, especially when we are to learn why it could not be known. Since Gorgias spent the whole argument defending the view that it cannot be known he does make clear why it could not be. As a consequence, there seems little room to hold Loenen's position that the classical interpretation is impossible. The classical view is correct.

Earlier on we set out the reductio style of arguing. This type of argument derives from an interlocutor's premises a conclusion which is unacceptable to the interlocutor. The premise from which the absurdity arises has to be abandoned. It is this sort of argument that Gorgias is using here. It may be remembered that in our earlier examination of the reductio[2] there was a special twist. The twist is no longer present. The section under study shows that if one imagined that anything exists (be it being or beings or non-being . . .)

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[1] Loenen, J. Parmenides, Melissus and Gorgias, p. 187.

[2] See pages eleven and twelve of this thesis.

unacceptable consequences will arise. This is the first set of conclusions; these cannot help but reaffirm our belief that nothing can exist.

We have already made some general remarks about the relation between the previous section and the following two. We must now consider this further. By doing this we will see better what Gorgias is now arguing and how the thesis as a whole hangs together. One solution to the problem of the relation between section one, and two and three, would come as a result of the striking contrast between on in section one and onta in sections two and three.[1] We would see Gorgias dealing with monism in the first section and pluralism in the latter two. This is in many ways an attractive view. It is, however, incorrect. That it is incorrect is evident because in section one Gorgias deals with being, non-being and both being and non-being. Now this is not the position of the monists--they only posit to on. It is true that contained within this first section the view that to on is what is is criticized, but the point still remains that he is attacking other views in this section as well. Section one is not, therefore, a repudiation of monism. In light of this, one might urge that although section one is not just a repudiation of monism, contained in this section is an attack on monism. This is to be seen when Gorgias overthrows being. But even this point does not hold.

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[1]The issue now being considered is different from the previously mentioned issue of whether the target of the second and third section is being or beings or both.

Gorgias asks whether being is one or many. If he took this work to be an attack on monism, then there would be no need to consider the many.

The conclusion that we must draw is that although there is a definite contrast with the use of the word "being" in section one and "beings" in sections two and three, we are not able to surmise that Gorgias first deals with monism and then moves on to consider pluralism.

If, however, the above is not what Gorgias has attempted, what has he attempted? Although Gorgias is not contrasting attacks on monism and pluralism, he surely is in the first section dealing with being and its variations (for example non-being) and in the latter sections with beings and their variations (as well, mention is given to being). The contrast seems to be between the works of the erudite cosmologists in the first section and the more "practically" oriented works of philosophers in the latter two sections. The practically oriented works are those in which philosophers speculate about the world as we might normally think we know it; for example, Plato and the atomists. This latter group also speculates in the lofty manner of the previously mentioned cosmologists, but as well, they seem to admit what we normally believe there is and do not wish to argue it away.[1]

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[1]Seeing the atomists as less erudite may, at first, seem a bitter pill to swallow. But it is not really difficult at all when one has allowed that their work also encompasses erudite work. As well, it seems a more reasonable position when we remember Aristotle's remarks on Leucippus in On Generation and Corruption (325A2).

Gorgias, then, first deals with those who argue in the more spectacular way. He defeats them. One might think that such a victory is a victory for common sense. But it is not. Gorgias's method of defeating the erudite speculation has been to demonstrate that nothing exists. He next shows that even with the assumptions of the less erudite, the conclusions of the erudite, there are serious problems such as one could not think or say what the less erudite think they think and say. Thus Gorgias does a reductio on the hypothesis of the less erudite even though he implies this is unnecessary, given the conclusions of the first section.

The picture of the tradition that Gorgias leaves to us is one in which the first camp is of a much more profound nature and really the only one that needs arguing against. Their conclusion of something existing is necessary for the less erudite. Philosophers such as Parmenides become (in one way or another) the philosophic underpinnings for all philosophic positions. For the sake of the disbeliever Gorgias argues further, but it is unnecessary. Such an arrangement on Gorgias's behalf certainly demonstrates a profound respect for the work of Parmenides.

Gorgias begins the second section at seventy-seven by offering the consequences of something existing. These consequences, it is unknowable and inconceivable to a man, are clearly not what we would normally accept. Gorgias is arguing that the assumptions of the less erudite philosophers lead not to a defense of the world as they suppose it; rather the assumptions lead to something entirely different, to conclusions that would not be acceptable to those who hold a rather

garden variety world view. For surely in thinking that there was something one also believes it to be conceivable and knowable. Those that hold there to be something must refute Gorgias.

Let us turn to Gorgias's argument. The next statement, "ei gar ta phronoumena, phēsin ho Gorgias, ouk estin onta, to on ou phroneitai" deserves a great deal of thought. Two points need to be brought out before we try to understand the statement. One point is the force of the contrast between on and onta. The other point is the use of the verb phroneō.

We have already said a good deal about to on and ta onta but it is also appropriate to say something here.[1] Up until this time Gorgias's concern has been with being, non-being and so on. Here is the first introduction of the plural participle. Its introduction should not be construed as showing that the previous arguments were incomplete. Although we can not say as much as we would like to about Parmenides use of to on, it is at least clear that were one to deny it, one would also deny ta onta.

It does not seem that we shall be able to get much further in our characterization of the singular articular participle from the verb "to be" than we have already, but we have yet to consider the plural. The translation of this is "beings". Gorgias seems to think of onta as in "various beings": this one, that one, the one over there. The visible, the audible, a man running on the sea and

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[1] If Gorgias at this point in the text cannot be understood to mean ta onta, he certainly can later in seventy-seven. The endeavor here is to capture the difference between to on and ta onta.

so forth are all different onta.

The verb phroneō also deserves comment. It seems that it is ambiguous. One way it can be taken is as "thinking about" as in "I was thinking about you". The other way it can be taken is "thinking" as in "I thought out a mathematical problem". The problem arises when we come to consider imagined entities. Gorgias may trade on thinking the non-entity and as such bring about its existence, and just thinking about it. Augustine in On the Teacher observes that when I say "lion" no lion issues from my mouth. When the verb phroneō is is used, say with regard to the chair being over there, in one way it might be thought to mean that we are just thinking about this chair; however, taking the verb in another way, we might be led to believe that our thinking has in some sense created something and one might move to thinking that one created the chairs over there.

The persuasiveness of Gorgias's argument may depend, at times, on this ambiguity. We must be well aware of this so that we can avoid falling into the same trap.

We have had enough of a pre-amble and now we are in a position to take up the first main argument in the argument against things (Gorgias's second section). This argument is found from seventy-seven through to seventy-nine. A conditional is given.

(1) If things thought are not beings, then being will not be thought.[1]

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[1]The analysis is done with the translation suggested in chapter one. Later on we will bring out the force of the argument on the alternative reading.

Let me first suggest what the various uses of "not" and "non" are. I take the force of "are not things" to be to deny that the things are beings. The force of "non-beings" is an attempt to name things that at least have a different sort of existence than this chair or that man. It may be the case that they have no existence at all, but that, no doubt, will only become apparent--if at all--later. In our considerations we must set aside the objection that "non" is not a name. It is not that this objection is felt to be invalid, but that after recognizing its force we drop the point so that we can better see what Gorgias has attempted to do.

Premise (1) is supported as a sound piece of reasoning with an argument by example. The example is that:

(a) if it happens to things thought that they are white, then it happens to white things that they are thought.

Let us explore the merits of this analogy <u>per se</u> to see whether or not it will guide us when we examine premise (1). If we read the phrase "if it happens to things thought that they are white" as a comment, the aim of which is that ideas themselves are white, rather than the object thought about being white, then the hypothesis is but an exercise in mental gymnastics that incorrectly attempts to ascribe colors to ideas--you can have the idea of a white horse, but not the white idea of a horse. Thus this interpretation of Gorgias needs to be rejected. The opening phrase must be read as a comment about the object thought about being a certain color. This will clear up the absurdity.

One difficulty with the way the argument has been put is

that we do not know how to "quantify" the claim; thus we do not know the scope of Gorgias's argument.

The argument might be read as "if it happens to all things thought . . . to all things white . . ." Although this is perfectly intelligible it is a poor reasoning. From the claim that all things thought are white it does not follow that there are not many white things that are not thought about. For example, I never will think about my white grandmother and never have. The second "all" is just too strong.

If the argument is changed to "if it happens to all things . . . to some white . . ." or "if it happens to some things . . . to some white . . ." and we can assume that there are things thought about, then the argument would seem to be sound. The problem with these interpretations is that there is no evidence for either uses of the word "some". The hypothesis, (a), does lend itself to being filled in with the word "all", however to fill in "some" is to stretch a point too far.

Even were the analogy, (a), open to being filled in with the word "some" we still would have a problem. The analogy may be able to show that some white things are thought, but this would only show (on analogy with premise (1)) that part of being[1] was not thought. Such a conclusion is not what Gorgias desires. As a sceptic, Gorgias wants to confront his audience by showing that they can not think

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[1]"Being" here understood to be one of the three T-expression alternatives discussed at the outset of our linguistic analysis of "being" in chapter two.

about things, not just that they can not think about some things.

The above remarks begin to clarify a problem of disanalogy between the example (a) and premise one. We might caricature premise one with:

(1) If A that -Bs, then B_ that -A.

However the example that is presented as an analogy is:

(a) If A that B_, then Bs that _A.

The point of this is that even were the white analogy persuasive it would still need to be shown why the example proves premise (1) correct.

The most important difference between the two cases is that in the example (a) we can talk about all or some white things. But such a move is not truly available to us with premise (1). Furthermore, it is not even clear what it would mean to talk about all or some being.

Regarding the analogy we have shown that it does not show that all white things are thought. We admit, however, that the claim that some white things are thought, given certain conditions, does follow. However, the problem is that a "some" conclusion is quite clearly not intended by the author and is insufficient for his task. As well, the analogy is not even applicable to (1) for in (1) it is being that is not thought, not beings.

Our considerations have brought us to the point where we know that the example (a) in no way supports premise (1). This, however, leaves open the issue of whether premise (1) is a legitimate inference on its own merit.

The model for this argument to be made best of is in the case in which being is the thing that is and yet beings are the various things that are. Being must be one of the three T-expression alternatives that we offered as one of the things that Gorgias might mean. On this interpretation it is not a dendron/dendra thesis but a hair/hairs.

When considering the analogy we rejected the interpretation that held that "things thought" refers to the idea itself. Now that we are considering premise (1) per se that rejection (since the analogy and (1) are not analogous) cannot be assumed here. Thus the possibility that the "things thought" refers to the idea itself must be considered here.

There are four examples of what Gorgias means by premise one.

A. if the objects of thought are not beings (e.g. not the tree or table . . .), then being (a T-expression) is not thought about.

B. if the objects of thought are not beings (e.g. not the tree or table . . .), then being (a T-expression) is not itself a thought.

C. if the thoughts themselves are not beings (e.g. not the tree or table . . .), then being ("being" is a T-expression) is not thought about.

D. if the thoughts themselves are not beings (e.g. not the tree or table . . .), then being ("being" is a T-expression) is not itself a thought.

Both interpretations, (A) and (B), of Gorgias's claim take Gorgias by "things thought" to mean objects in the world that we think about. The hypothesis then is that objects in the world are not beings or, on the alternate translation, not in existence. Yet Gorgias goes on to imagine a man flying. At this point he is

just thinking of imagined entities. He is not seeing a man flying, he does not know that one is there. Gorgias's referent is clearly his thought and not the object itself. Thus it becomes clear that we can not understand Gorgias to mean the objects when he talks of "things thought".

Allowing that the use of being as a T-expression is intelligible (D) would seem to follow. If the individual beings are not themselves thoughts, then the name for the individuals as a whole would likely not be a thought either.[1]

Although (D) follows it is unlikely that this is what Gorgias wanted to argue. His arguments do not seem not so much to point out, (what seems correct), that the object being is not the thought, (perhaps meaning the concept), being and thus the objects, beings, are not the thoughts (perhaps meaning concepts) beings. Such conceptual analysis may be illuminating but of little benefit to his argument. What Gorgias wanted to point out is that one is not in a position to think about the thing being.

Let us turn to (C). This does not follow. Because it is not the case that beings are the thoughts themselves we do not thereby rule out thinking about beings or being. One <u>might</u> be able to argue this, but such a claim is not apparent. Thus although (D) seems reasonable it is not of interest to us whereas (C), which does not

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[1]We are assuming that what follows for the individuals follows for their collective name or the name of their substrate or genus. There seems to be no reason to object to such a thesis though quite clearly it could be otherwise.

follow, is probably what Gorgias is interested in.

What Gorgias intends by premise (1) does not work at all. But at least we can see how it is to be understood.

Earlier we rejected the following translation of premise (1). "If things thought are not in existence, then being is not thought". It has been argued that this translation is not adequate, yet the lack of the definite article with the plural neuter participle leaves one somewhat uneasy; thus we must consider the premise when translated in this way. It seems that the same reasoning holds on this reading of the premise. That is, we can set up a complementary set of interpretations and deal with them in just the same way. Alternatives (A) and (B) fail for the reasons suggested. Alternative (C) fails to get Gorgias his desired conclusion. Alternative (D) though not thought to be true seems to be what he is getting at.

From the above considerations we seem to be in a position to conclude that Gorgias's reasoning in premise (1) is inadequate and he has not substantiated the point.

Gorgias introduced the earlier considered example (a) to support premise (1). But after using the example to support premise (1), Gorgias, still in seventy-seven, suggests it supports:

1a) If it happens to things thought that they are not beings, then according to necessity it happens to beings that they are not thought.

This latter statement is again different from (1)--here we are only talking about beings and not both being and beings--and the example. Premise (1a) has the form:

If A that -B<u>s</u> then B<u>s</u> that -<u>A</u>

In premise (1) Gorgias seems to be establishing a relation between being and beings. Being seems to be the being of Parmenides and is not this or that object.[1] Gorgias seems to have in mind the erudite cosmologists. The example offered, however turns out not to be analogous to premise (1) and when Gorgias, apparently, restates the premise, after offering the analogy, what he states is very different. This premise (1a) keeps up a relation between beings and things that are not beings. Thus it is somewhat clearer than (1), however, it is no more supported by the example (a) that (1) is. As well, premise (1a) fails because, like the white analogy, it does not deal with thinking about my white grandmother. That is to say, we saw that the analogy only works when "some" is read in the apodesis. The general intent of the argument in both (1) and (1a) makes the reading of "some" in the apodesis inappropriate to the author's aims. Obviously a conclusion with the word "some" in it will not get a nihilist his conclusions. That nihilistic conclusions are sought is quite apparent (see for example the opening of seventy-nine).

At seventy-eight Gorgias states what he takes to have shown. Here he goes back to his original premise, (1), and seems to be dropping considerations about (1a).[2]

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[1]This premise requires the relationship between "being" and "beings" to be like the relationship between "hair" and "hairs".

[2]In fact this last statement is somewhat misleading. One of the respects in which statements (1) and (1a) differ is in regard to being and beings as the subject of discourse. Although Gorgias

Gorgias goes on in seventy-eight to state that he can prove that the things thought are not beings. This is the second premise of his argument.

2) Things thought are not beings.

Given this premise and by means of modus ponena we could conclude that being is not thought.[1]

3) Being is not thought. (1,2. modus ponena)

We are not persuaded by this argument since, as has been shown, premise (1) is inadequately defended. The argument Gorgias gives fails to confirm the premise in any way. Furthermore, the premise, (1), does not stand on its own merits. But even if premise (1) were shown to hold Gorgias still has the hurdle of showing premise (2) to be true. He now goes on to do just this.

In seventy-nine Gorgias begins to verify his second premise with the following argument:

i) if things thought (about) are beings, then all things should exist in whichever way someone should think (about) them.

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no longer considers statement (1a) he does continue, nevertheless, to argue on some occasions about beings and conclude about beings, while on other occasions he argues about beings, but concludes concerning being. Hence Gorgias seems to preserve two trains of thought throughout the argument.

[1]The conclusion here is quite clearly that being cannot be thought about. In the opening of seventy-seven Gorgias said that he was going to show that if anything (ti) should exist it cannot be thought. It seems likely then that Gorgias is now taking "being" to be the name of everything that exists. Hence it becomes clear what Gorgias is meaning by "being" and that beings must be the things that go to make up being. Since this is so, we can see that the two trains of thought are complementary to each other because of the relationship that has been established between being and beings.

We might suspect that (i) is in some way derivable from premise (1). It does not seem to be, so as yet we do not have a way of founding (i). Furthermore, because there is no internal support for this premise (i) we must assume that Gorgias felt that the point was an obvious one which stood on its own merits. Though it is not obvious that premise (i) can stand on its own merits, it is clear that Gorgias has engaged us in another reductio.

Does premise (i) stand valid? The opening phrase of premise (i) may be thought to imply that: (a) ideas are beings, or (b) the objects thought about are beings. Interpretation (a) must be rejected since it does not follow from the fact that ideas exist, that the things thought about exist. Indeed Gorgias can be seen to be cognizant of this by virtue of his remark about it being trivial.[1] If the protasis could be supported, then interpretation (b) of premise (i) is what Gorgias needs in order to further his argument. On this second interpretation it should follow that if I thought about a tree with yellow stripes, then there would need to be that tree "out there". Yet, one does not think that the premise, understood in this way, is true. The only way to get the argument going in Gorgias's way is to confuse the two interpretations ((a) and (b)) such that one applies the argument in the second way (b), but scrutinizes the validity of the premise in the first interpretation (a). Since the verb easily leads to such confusion one can have sympathy

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[1] We will have more to say about this later.

with someone holding Gorgias's argument. Still we must hold the view to be incorrect.

Although Gorgias's argument has confused thinking about and thinking the thing, he now goes on to show that he can be very clear about the difference. This can be seen in his denial of the apodesis but for the trivial case. At this juncture Gorgias must be perfectly clear about the distinction between the thought existing (the trivial case) and the object existing. That Gorgias bases his argument on the confusion, yet appears to be clear on the distinction leads one to believe that his major concern is to take his predecessors assumptions and show that their methods and mistakes lead only to an enigma.

Gorgias suggests that the above is unlikely except for a trivial sense in which it is true;[1] that is, Gorgias concedes that if one thinks of a tree the thought of the tree exists. This is the trivial sense which is not relevant to the case at hand. That it is the existence of the thought which is trivial is made obvious by the phrase "in whichever way one might conceive them" and the fact that Gorgias goes on to look for a man on the sea and not the thought of a man on the sea.

When Gorgias suggests that it is unlikely, he might have one of three targets in mind. If we see the premise (i) in the following way; $p \supset q$, then what is unlikely is either: (1) p; or (2) q; or

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[1]Gorgias means by "the above the apodesis; that this is true, we shall show in a moment.

(3) $p \supset q$. Clearly Gorgias is not denying p for later Gorgias talks about Scylla and Chimera. As well, one doubts Gorgias objections to the whole relation set forth in $p \supset q$. If this were his project, then he would have simply undercut the work he has set forth. When it is realized that the conclusion drawn at the end of seventy-nine is "things thought are not beings", $-p$, and when we re-examine his justification for what is unlikely, then we see that Gorgias held q to be unlikely.

The steps of the argument are then:

i) if things thought are beings, then all things should exist in whichever way someone should think them.

ii) This is unlikely except in a trivial sense. That is, it is not the case that all things exist in whichever way someone should think them.

iii) Things thought are not beings (i,ii. modus tollens) (vide end of 79)

Gorgias in seventy-nine has correctly used the modus tollens method of arguing. If the premises were true, the conclusion would follow. We have already criticized the argument by showing that premise (i) rests on a confusion; now we must examine premise (ii).

The argument maintaining that all things do not exist in whichever way someone imagines them comes from a very simple observation.[1] This observation that if we imagine something that does not imply that it is so. Because I imagine I get a job, that does not

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[1]The argument is put by Gorgias in terms of thinking. The point holds equally well for imagines and is easier to understand. Thus for our purposes we will talk about imagining.

mean I get one. Gorgias's point is fairly obvious and well taken. The only counter to it might be "Well, it exists (the job, the flying man, etcetera) in your imagination". But Gorgias has taken care of this objection in two ways. First, he allowed for just this sort of case when he allowed for trivial cases. These cases, as we mentioned before, rest on a confusion of having an idea of a man and then concluding that there is a man. One collapses the two and speaks of the man in the mind. But no man is there, but only an idea--if one can speak of an idea being there. Second, Gorgias guards against the thing existing in the mind is his attached rider "in whichever way one conceives them". When one conceives, one brings about the conception of the thing at most, so the way or manner is a conception. Thus this qualifier makes it perfectly clear that the thing does not come to be, but rather the trivial conception comes to be.[1] Premise (ii) unlike premise (i) seems to be true.

The conclusion, (iii) in this sub-argument is very important to Gorgias's purposes. This Gorgias takes to be proof of premise (2) of the main argument.[2] Since he also believes himself to have proved premise (1) of the main argument, then these two premises by modus ponens ential conclusion (3) that being is not thought. We do not draw this conclusion along with Gorgias since we criticized premise (1) and we do not see that he can hold premise (2). We

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[1]Let me emphasize a point already made. Premise (ii) Gorgias is clear on the confusion that does arise in premise (i).

[2]See pages 145 through to page 153.

need to further consider Gorgias's justification of premise (2). That is, we need to say more about the sub-argument. When Gorgias draws the conclusion, (iii), he does not add the rider which points to the trivial case. Thus even without the error already discussed, the statement that things thought are not beings is very misleading. That this statement has been put in a misleading way becomes even more important when the conclusion of the sub-argument is used in the main argument. For were the second premise of the main argument to be what can be justifiably concluded, namely that things thought are not beings except in a trivial sense, then this would effectively stop the main argument.[1] For the trivial sense, though trivial in the sub-argument, is important in the main argument as it is the very thing which allows that being is thought.

Regarding the charioteer example in the sub-argument Leonen says:

> From this example the whole drift of Gorgias' argument against Melissus becomes clear even if it is granted that something that is might in principle exist, the fact of it's being thought is no evidence whatever for its actual existence, because it is known from experience that not all that is conceived in the mind actually exists.[2]

This remark is interesting because it seems to put a much too strong interpretation on the argument. Loenen feels that Gorgias is holding that being thought is no evidence whatever for a things existence. That seems a little harsh. Gorgias certainly is hoping

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[1] See page 153 of this thesis.

[2] Loenen, Parmenides, Melissus & Gorgias, page 193.

to point out that thinking a thing does not prove that it exists, but there is not enough evidence to show that he further thinks it false that it has any relevance whatever. Loenen seems to have taken a very radical stand, yet the stand is unnecessary. The point would rather be that thinking is evidence and that our sources (thinking, seeing, and so on) lead us to contradiction. Thus we have to give up something. This keeps the harmony with Gorgias's view that thinking and the senses are parallel.

A point that bears mentioning regarding Gorgias's examples is what is used to underwrite them. If we think that the charioteer is there and yet know that he is not, then we must have a means of justifying our knowledge. Intuitions are clearly not adequate. The manner in which we know must be by our seeing, hearing, and so forth. These modes must be being relied in the case considered. In the example, we had a conflict between modes of knowing and here we depend on seeing and hearing. That these must be our means of knowing will become important later on.

A very attractive way to view this argument, in seventy-nine, would be to see Gorgias depending on the theory that thinking and the other methods of knowing as equally valid. Then pointing out that they lead to different results (i.e. seeing showing that there is no chariot, but thinking showing that there is a chariot). Thus because of the inconsistencies within the system it is apparent that the system is not adequate. Thus we abandon our methods of knowing so that we cannot know things. This argument would take the conflict to the conclusion of the second section. But Gorgias

does not see this argument taking us independantly of the main one to the conclusions of the main argument. Rather Gorgias has used the conflict of the sub-argument to support premise two (2) of the main argument. Such a way of construing Gorgias, though very attractive, cannot be accepted.

Although this last interpretation is not to be accepted, it does bring to the forefront the contrast that Gorgias is giving to thinking and (likely) perception. One method leads to one conclusion, the other to another. What he does with this contradiction need not concern us for the moment. Parmenides offered a different opinion regarding thinking and perception. "For he regards perception and thought as the same".[1] Empedecoles also holds such a view "thought and perception being different, not, as Empedecoles maintains, the same."[2] It is not right to suggest that Gorgias is the first to maintain that the two are different. It is, however, appropriate to suggest that Gorgias makes clear that the two are different and as such shows that the direction of his masters is wrong.

In the sub-argument Gorgias attempted to establish that things thought are not beings. That was to establish premise (2) of the main argument, which in turn led by means of modus ponens to the conclusion that being is not thought. In paragraph eighty Gorgias again attempts to prove that being is not thought. Here Gorgias argues

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[1]Kirk and Raven, Pre-Socratic Philosophy, #357, p. 282.

[2]Kirk and Raven, Pre-Socratic Philosophy, #357, p. 282.

directly for the conclusion of the main argument and is not supportive of the main argument. The methodology of the argument is one that we have already encountered. Gorgias brackets what he takes to the case, uses someone else's assumptions and then shows that even these (incorrect) assumptions yield Gorgias's conclusion.

Premise (1) in the argument at seventy-seven, (the main argument), was that if things thought are not beings, being will not be thought. Here Gorgias's premise is "If the things thought are beings, non-beings will not be thought". Gorgias doubts that things thought are beings; thus Gorgias now argues with his opponents position. As well, this assumption complements the "main argument" just discussed insofar as Gorgias now proves his point on both the assumption that things thought are not beings and things thought are beings. This move makes his attack on thinking about being more persuasive because of its completeness. In addition to this, we find that with the premise now brought forward, we consider the trivial case dismissed in the sub-argument. Clearly Gorgias has attempted a thorough job in which no gaps have been left.

The reason the premise is if things thought (about) are beings, non-beings will not be thought (about), may be because of the principle of opposition discussed earlier. That is, if being thought goes with beings, then the opposite of being thought, not being thought, goes with the opposite of not being, beings. (Here in fact the construction is not perfectly symmetrical because of the attempted distinction between "not" and "non".) Earlier, in the argument against non-being in sixty-seven, we also saw the reasoning

of opposites applying to opposites.[1] Such a view then seems fairly entrenched in Gorgias's work. Let us not here take up the issue of that principle, nor let us take up the point that being and non-being are not opposites. These, in addition to the point that this premise cannot be derived from premise (1) of the main argument[2] lead us to conclude that there is no adequate internal support for the hypothesis. However, we do need to consider the validity of the premise independently of Gorgias's defense of it.

Can Gorgias support the claim that if things thought are beings, non-beings will not be thought? It does not seem to have any apparent validity. One feels pressed to conclude that the only way to support the claim would be by means of the principle of opposition. However, the reasons why that principle will not help us out has been mentioned and argued earlier.[3]

Having stated that opposites belong with each other Gorgias considers the case of Scylla and Chimera. We seem to be able to think about these yet they are not beings. This then brings up a difficulty that needs to be resolved.

These are the premises of the argument:

A) If things thought (about) are beings, non-beings are not thought. ($p \supset q$)

B) Non-beings are thought, e.g. Scylla and Chimera. ($-q$)

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[1] See page 85 of this thesis.

[2] Even if this premise could be derived from premise (1) of the earlier mentioned main argument, it would be of no help, since have shown that premise, (1), to rest on a confusion

[3] See page 60 of this thesis.

C) Therefore, being is not thought. (A&B, modus tollens) (-p)

Strictly speaking, modus tollens ought to conclude that things thought are not beings. He has drawn an incorrect conclusion; for quite clearly "being is not thought" and "things thought are not beings" are different claims, even with what we might want to say about the relationship between being and beings.

One way of dealing with Gorgias is quite similar to the earlier mentioned way PA dealt with the hypothesis that nothing existed.[1] Gorgias could equally well have pointed out that the tree and the chair are beings that can be thought. (We do feel equally confident to think about chairs as we do about Chimera.) Thus depending on which examples one chooses one can take this argument to be: (1) $p \supset q$, (2) $-q$, (3) $-p$, or, (1) $p \supset q$ (2) p (3) q. Obviously something is wrong. One suspects, as we argued above, that there is no reason to believe that q follows upon p. As such the whole problem has been inadequately stated.[2]

At eighty-one Gorgias launches his third argument proving, in eighty-two, that being cannot be thought nor apprehended. Gorgias argues his point on analogy with the manner in which the senses work. Here Gorgias understands the mind to work in a fashion

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[1] See page 136 of this thesis.

[2] A point that needs to be observed about this argument is that the argument argues that being is not thought rather than that something is not thought. Gorgias leads us to believe he was going to argue the former yet concludes the latter. This, as with the argument beginning at seventy-seven leads us to believe that "being" is now being used to cover everything that there is. We further believe that "beings" must be understood to cover the various individuals that in some sense go to make up being.

parallel to the operation of our senses. Alternatively, we might suggest that Gorgias takes the operation of the mind to be one of the sense faculties. In any case, the two are considered to operate in the same fashion.

We must carefully distinguish the view that the operation of the mind is on a par with one of the senses from the earlier denial that thought was perception. One is not the negation of the other, the views are very different. Earlier Gorgias showed, against his predecessors, that thinking is not perception. He now takes the view that thinking is a sense. Gorgias is involved in no inconsistancies here.

We do need to consider whether Gorgias's present thesis is correct. Do we see the use of the intellect to be on a par with the use of the (other?) senses. The hypothesis seems unlikely. In examining the details of the argument we will show some of the differences between the operation of the senses and the operation of the intellect. This conflation of the intellect with the senses may seem quite unusual, but it is not so difficult to understand when it is remembered that oida is the perfect of horaō.[1]

In eighty-one Gorgias begins to lay out the theoretical basis for his argument. Gorgias observes that the objects of sight are said to be visible because they are the sorts of things that we see. In a similar manner Gorgias claims that the things heard are

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[1] In this thesis we will not attempt a systematic analysis to show wherein the intellect differs from the senses. We will assume that it is obvious to the reader that the two are radically different.

audible because they are heard. Again, it is held that these are the only sorts of things that we can hear, there are no others. What is arising here is a view of what is appropriate to which faculty. Gorgias is pointing out that the things seen are visible only insofar as they are seen. It is not because the object is of a certain height, width and so on, that it is seen, but because it is seen that we claim it is visible. The same type of reasoning applies to the other sense.

Gorgias's point may seem trivial or uninteresting, but, in point of fact, it is much more interesting than just obvious. Suppose someone were to give the following argument--and it seems some do. The reason why you see that object is because the light waves struck the object, were then reflected into your eyes. These waves, because they were of a certain length, cause the cones to react in a certain way which excited various nerves and via synaptic response effected an area in your brain such that you saw a red tree. Such a view gets so engrossed with the mechanics of light waves or sound waves, nerves and so forth that the notion of seeing what is seen is replaced by the above.

Gorgias's rather simple observation prevents us from such neglect. We might still feel it is interesting to talk of waves of a certain frequency, but we are not allowed to forget to talk about the seen (because it is what we see), or the heard (because it is what we hear).[1]

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[1]A point of interest regarding Gorgias's connecting the visible with seeing and the seen is that in holding that there is

A conclusion Gorgias draws from his argument is that we have to judge the given object with the appropriate sense. If we want to know what this feels like we must feel it. Using a different sense will be of no aid in anyone's project. Listening will not tell us anything about how it feels. Similarly, if one looks at the object, that puts him in no position at all[1] to judge that it makes no sound. For this one has to listen. Naturally by means of what one sees one might want to <u>infer</u> that it makes no sound. The handle is not striking the gong. Nevertheless, the final court of appeals as to whether or not it makes a sound will be through the faculty of hearing.[2]

Gorgias now applies these considerations to our ability to think. Taking only what is written in the text Gorgias argues "thus too the things thought will exist even though they shound not be looked at by the visual faculty". But understanding there to be some deletion such that this argument remains parallel to the previous claims, then Gorgias would argue: "thus too things thought will be thinkable even though . . .".

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seeing we necessarily hold to a thing that is seen. Similarly in holding that there is a thing seen we necessarily hold to a seeing. This pointed is not explicitly stated in the argument, but does underwrite what Gorgias argues.

[1]The "at all" is probably too strong. This will be discussed later on.

[2]Empedecoles seems to have brought this up already when he suggests that one sense cannot judge the other.

Arguing from the vantage point of grammar only, either translation is quite acceptable. We must, then, examine the question from a different point of view. In order to decide which conclusion is Gorgias's we should examine the end to which he takes his argument. In paragraph eighty-two Gorgias imagines a case in which one thinks that chariots are running on the sea, but one does not see these chariots. One is, because of the above argument, to conclude that there are chariots.

If we choose the more literal translation, then we need criticize Gorgias in eighty-one by saying that because the analysis of thinking is not parallel to the analysis of the other senses, we cannot conclude that there are no chariots.[1] In this way we reject the development of the argument in eighty-two because the argument is based on an incorrect analysis of thinking. If we take the interpretation that assumes deletion then we agree that the work in eighty-one is quite acceptable allowing that the mind to be another sense or at least working on the same principles. We then criticize Gorgias's argument in eighty-two by saying that the person is obliged to believe that he thinks that (imagines that) chariots are running, but that does not mean he has support to hold that these are chariots.

Such thoughts set out the problem but they do not solve it. In whichever way we are to understand Gorgias it is clear at least that Gorgias in eighty-one attempts to apply the thesis concerning the operations of the senses to the operation of the mind. Nothing

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[1] A more detailed account of this argument will be given shortly.

but thinking can judge what is thought about as only seeing can judge the visible.

In order to facilitate the discussion of which of the two readings is correct let us examine the opening phrase of our problematic sentence. It can be read as "Thus too the things thought . . ." and "Thus too the things thought about". The latter reading better captures Gorgias's point. This passage is offered to show a parallel between the mind and the senses. In the passages concerning the senses one begins by talking about the objects of perception. So here we too are also talking about the objects, but now objects of thought, the things themselves.

In setting out the cases to be parallel Gorgias would need to argue that the things thought about are thinkable.[1] Now in holding that something was visible we saw the import of this remark to be that there was both the seen thing and the seeing. Here Gorgias is arguing a parallel point. In getting the thing thought to be admitted to be thinkable we end up with both a thinking and a thing thought. Thus one sees that as it could be argued that if the chariots were visible then there was both the seeing and the existing things, similarly here in allowing it thinkable one gets both that one thinks and that the thing exists.

We now see the thrust of Gorgias's argument. The issue of which is the correct translation is not decided upon. A decision is no longer vital. If one reads the argument as "exists", then,

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[1]This is the interpretation that assumes deletion.

in view of the claimed parallelism between the mind and the senses, one must hold that the claim of being thinkable because it is thought is understood. If, however, one reads the argument as "is thinkable" then again, in view of the attempted parallelism between the mind and the senses, we see that thinking proves that the things thought exist in just the same way as seeing the visible proves that the thing seen exists.[1]

Gorgias, in paragraph eighty-two, shows where these considerations lead. Were we to think about chariots running on the sea, we would have to assume that these chariots are there, even though we may not see them. By an appeal to our normal sensibilities Gorgias suggests that our belief that there are the chariots is absurd. Since the argument has followed logically to an absurd conclusion, the premise on which the argument rests, that being is thought and apprehended, must be rejected.

Gorgias takes his argument to reject the view that being is thought and apprehended. This, however, is an odd thing for him to reject. His argument has not argued so much about being, but beings.

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[1]Let us review Gorgias's progress in this argument. Gorgias has claimed that the objects of each sense is judged by that sense only. Thus seeing is the only thing that can make any decisions about what is seen. This sort of reasoning is applied to the other sense as well. These considerations are next applied to the realm of the intellect. Hence what is thought is to be judged only by the thinking. Furthermore when we had seeing we had a thing seen so similarly, when we have thinking we have a thing thought. As the thing seen is "out there" so the thing thought is "out there". So by seeing we prove the object exists and by thinking we prove its object exists. As well, only the faculty appropriate to the particular object can be used to make judgements.

Indeed, being has not even been mentioned in the argument before he draws his conclusion. So one would naturally expect him to reject the view that one can think about beings. That the conclusion that is drawn is drawn, again, brings forth the (by now familiar) claim that Gorgias must take "being" to be the name for all beings. Hence he can argue concerning beings and conclude about being.

To defend our abilities to think and apprehend from Gorgias's attack we must point out that the argument has not logically reached absurd conclusions. There are a number of incorrect moves that lead Gorgias to his conclusion. Identifying these errors will save us from Gorgias's predicament.

At no point does Gorgias consider that the reason for the absurdity might be either the assumption that thinking is a sense or the principle of the separateness of faculties. The question of separateness we will take up later. Let us begin with the problems of disanalogy between the senses and the intellect (which we have already considered to some extent). Gorgias has argued that thinking x should lead us to believe in the existence of the thing and not just the thought. Gorgias depends on the fact that thinking yields that what one thinks exists. That claim, however, is just false. To counter Gorgias we begin to forge a distinction between the operation of the mind and that of the senses. When I think about a man running on the sea I may think about him running on the sea, but I may or may not, think that he is there. Thus we have two importantly different cases to consider: 1) thinking about a man, and 2) thinking that man is there. Gorgias has not at all distinguished the two

cases; in fact he has assimilated all cases of thinking about to be cases of thinking that. However, the two cases are distinct. We should also notice that there is no parallel to these two cases with seeing.[1] Thus although it is plain how the argument might be expected to go in the case of seeing, because of the distinction we have drawn, we know that there is no reason for Gorgias's argument to go through in the case of thinking.

Perhaps a different way to consider the same objection is to bring forth very well known operations such as supposing, fancying, pretending, as modes of thinking. In cases such as fancying one does not expect that what one fancies is there, whereas one does suppose that someone is there when one thinks that . . . So to fancy is not to make any commitment about what is in fact "out there". From this we again see a disanalogy with the senses such that one can think about--in the case say of fancy--and yet not be led to believe that something is there.

Having attempted to expand and extend our analysis on our thinking processes so that we are not drawn in by Gorgias's argument, let us examine a point at which his argument is not as susceptable to as much criticism as might otherwise be expected. In order to combat Gorgias one might suggest that the argument is correct but only proves that there must be a thought "in the mind" instead of showing that there is something "out there". Thus one avoids the

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[1] Of course one might see that everything is in order, but here "see" is not being used as a verb of perception. Rather, it means something like "make sure".

problems that Gorgias foresees.

Gorgias could reply to this argument by suggesting that, in the case of vision, the hypothesis of seeing showed a seen "out there" and incidently a mental image in the mind. Similarly, this argument shows an object thought about and incidently a thought in the mind. Such a reply then would require his critic to argue against mental images and so forth. Such a task may not be impossible, but certainly difficult and intricate. Thus the easier and more perspicuous methods of above ought to be adopted.

A different tact and one that seems to have some force --though perhaps ultimately unsuccessful--concerns allowing the analogy with the senses, but then showing that even in this case it would not follow that thinking x implied the existence of x.

We begin by re-considering thinking, hearing, seeing, etcetera. Suppose I hear the sound of a bell. Do I conclude that the bell exists? Clearly I can conclude that I hear its sound, but the further conclusion that the bell exists may be disputed (This Gorgias has not disputed). For instance, one might urge that although one has heard the sound of the bell, one cannot conclude that the bell exists, for what one heard may have been a taperecording.[1] Since in the case of hearing we can allow the perceiving without the object thereby existing we should move these considerations to thinking. Here we can conclude that there is the thinking, but one does not necessarily draw

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[1]Similar stories can be constructed for the other senses as well.

the further conclusions that the thing thought exists.[1]

A counter-argument to our argument could be raised by suggesting that the person only thought he heard the sound of a bell. In fact, he heard a tape-recording of the sound of the bell. The tape-recording of the sound of a bell is different from the sound of a bell--though it may not be obvious which is which upon hearing both. One then was only really in a position to conclude that the tape-recording existed. Hence the conclusion that one can have perceiving without the perceived is not true, for one must hear either the sound of the bell or the tape-recording of that sound.

The counter-argument seems more powerful than the argument; hence this further avenue to escape from the absurdities of Gorgias's argument is blocked. To block Gorgias's argument we must rely on the dis-analogy between the senses and thinking and the earlier given argument that in thinking about x we do not necessarily think that it exists.

A totally different way to forestall Gorgias's conclusion that we can neither apprehend nor understand being comes by considering how Gorgias discovers the absurdity and whether or not he is justified in making the discovery. Ought the absurdity to be absurd on Gorgias's grounds? We must answer no. Let us begin by quoting the relevant part of the argument.

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[1]This argument is similar in attempt, though not in method, to the argument given immediately above.

> Therefore if someone considers chariots running on the sea, even if he does not see them, he is obliged to believe that chariots are running on the sea. But this is absurd.[1]

Gorgias offers the separateness of faculties in a very serious way. At no point does he take this back. As such, it would seem that Gorgias has no resources to find the absurdity. That he holds there to be an absurdity clearly shows that Gorgias is not consistant in his own methodology. Gorgias concludes that only the thinking can judge the thought, yet his practise is different. Seeing and all the other faculties judge the thought. (How else would he know that when he thinks even still there is no chariot?)

In contrast to Gorgias's predicament you and I can know of the absurdity in holding the view that because we think of chariots running on the sea, there must be these chariots. When we judge that there is a bell, one of the methods used is via a consenses of the senses. That is, one notes that the object looks like a bell, feels like a bell, sounds like a bell. As well, one observes that there are not peculiarities such that one may be led to doubt that it is a bell--for instance: it smells like an apple, is on a movie set, is in a hall of mirrors and so on.

Gorgias separation of the faculties does not allow for the consenses of the faculties and, as well, cannot take in the importance of peculiarities. Thus separateness has gone too far. It is true

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[1] Sextus Empericus "Against the Logicias", #82, translated on page 7 of this thesis.

that through seeing x we judge that a thing is seen, but in order to judge whether a thing is there (which is, after all, another issue), we use what we see, smell and so forth in combination with what we know about the situation and what we know about the thing which we think is there. If we did not do some such thing, the problems one would have in a movie house or gazing at a rainbow would be insoluable. As such, if we think about a chariot and if we want to know whether it exists, then though we may think it to be there, to be sure, we must listen, look and so forth. Gorgias, as suggested has no room to do this. Indeed his doctrine of separateness specifically prevents one doing this. That Gorgias himself does in fact resort to such an inter-dependence in order to see the absurdity shows us not that we can not think about things, but only that the principle of separation is not legitimate. When we become free of this principle of separation, then there is no reason to think that the chariots must be out there in the first place.[1]

Let us now bring out a way of criticizing the view that being and beings are unknowable that has application to sceptics both ancient and modern. Our attempt is to criticize scepticism, specifically Gorgias, in what seems to be a mistake of methodology. Since our subject is Gorgias most of our attention will go to him, but because this is a problem that seems to be entrenched in much of

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[1] As Plato, in his Sophist (244b-e), pointed out that monist are unable to state their position and remain monists, we have pointed out that Gorgias is unable to notice the absurdity and maintain the principle of separation (which generates the absurdity).

scepticism some notice of other sceptics must be given as well.

Gorgias has argued via the contradictory results offered by the ways of knowing,[1] that nothing can be known. Yet even were we persuaded that the results of the faculties were in contradiction with each other--we did not know whether or not there was a man running on the sea--nevertheless, it remains that we still know things. Gorgias wishes us, because of the contradiction to conclude that the system is inconsistant and thus we must deny that we know anything. Yet by his very argument we know quite well that we do not see a man running on the sea. Why does a conflict force us to give that up? One may be very unimpressed with such knowledge and claim that it is of little use, yet it remains knowledge. From this we learn that we do not need to make the radical jump that Gorgias has made. Gorgias--if anything--has shown us a problem about what we know; we have learned that there are problems in drawing certain inferences that we normally do draw. Although Gorgias may have shown that the structure of knowledge is not as sound as it might have otherwise seemed, he has not (as he believes he has) offered us anything like a reason to believe that the structure has fallen to the ground.

The move from the discovery of a certain number of problems in knowing to the claim that we know nothing whatsoever seems to be a

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[1]It does seem to be the case that Gorgias takes each faculty to give us knowledge, rather than just form the basis from which we can know.

standard ploy (and error) with sceptics. Descartes moves from the different reports of the various senses and his ability to imagine plus his need for certainty to the position that he does not know anything. He also has forgotten to bring forth a great deal that he knows, for example: his ability to reason clearly and precisely which includes a certain dependency on the consistancy of meaning of terms, that certain rules of logic apply, that ten hours later it all still holds etcetera. So although Descartes alledges that he does not know anything, the argument itself demonstrates that he knows a great deal. C. I. Lewis is another epistemologist who, when using scepticism to forge a problem he hopes to consider, forgets or ignores or does not understand the implications of some of the things he knows when he talks about the things he knows. Lewis feels that although practical certainty may be reached, theoretical certainty is not available to the individual. Yet different considerations must govern his argument. Lewis is quite persuaded that his argument works or, at least, can be made to work. Here he has cut off the possibility of error. His own argument is refined, or can be, such that there is no chance it is misguided. We see then that while advocating the lack of ability to be certain that very ability is assumed to draw the conclusion. This failure to be consistant, the dependence on certainty or knowledge in order to exclude certainty or knowledge arises in the cases considered and seems quite general in scepticism.

The error that we find in Gorgias seems to be an error that scepticism is often guilty of. This error is quite perspicuous in

Gorgias and from the examination of the problem here, it becomes markedly easier to see that error in later epistemologists.

A point concerning the argument of Gorgias yet demands our attention. We need to explain why Gorgias has argued concerning both thought and apprehended. By these two terms it seems that Gorgias is wanting to cover both the active and passive operations of the mind. By "thought" Gorgias covers the cases in which we sit down and think something out. By "apprehend" Gorgias covers the cases where a thought strikes one or comes to mind. Obviously if the argument works for the one, it should also work for the other.

PA's recording of this second section of Gorgias's work is short. So short that it takes only 12 lines to record the argument (980a7-19). In reducing the argument to this size a lot has been left out i.e. the white analogy, the contrast between things thought and beings. A more unfortunate consequence, however is that the account has become unintelligible. Unlike PA's reduction in the first distinct proof, here we can no longer separate the elements to see a semi-intelligible argument. Various classicists have worked on the argument with varying degrees of success. The most successful attempts, however, require,to quote Loveday and Forster, "considerable changes in the text".[1] Since the text or argument is in such rough shape and since we have a sufficient account of the argument and

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[1]Loveday and Forester, in their translation of Pseudo-Aristotle in Volume 6 of The Works of Aristotle Translated into English. Footnote 5 at 980A.

since we are only looking for supplementary information, let us not concern ourselves any longer with PA's recording of the argument.

We have now finished the second section of Gorgias's work. He has shown us that one cannot think about being and beings.[1] We take ourselves to have shown we have shown the problems in the arguments to these conclusions.

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[1] Both conclusions seem intended.

Chapter Four: It Cannot Be Said

In finishing the argument at eighty-two Gorgias has disposed of the view that given being's existence one could think about being (and beings) as well as apprehend it. At eighty-three Gorgias maintains the assumption that being exists and, in addition, assumes that it can be thought about. The point Gorgias argues here is that even given all these (false) assumptions one still would not be able to talk about being. The ability to talk about a subject is, of course, of particular importance to any philosopher. Gorgias's last attack on his predecessors then concerns something very vital to one who would argue against Gorgias. Indeed it is somewhat amusing to see a philosopher argue that we cannot speak.

As the question has been set out to this point, Gorgias's concern seems only to be whether we can speak about a particular topic, being. A few lines later, however, Gorgias seems to be arguing that we cannot talk about beings. We should wonder what Gorgias means to deny in our not being able to speak.[1]

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[1] In Paremenides Melissus and Gorgias (page 186) Loenen suggests that Gorgias means to point out that speaking makes no sense and not that it is physically impossible. Such considerations are likely true, however, they do not go far enough; for one must ask what is it that we would otherwise speak about.

If here again we assume the relation between being and beings to be like the relation between hair and hairs,[1] then the argument takes on greater consequence; for in proving that the Eleatic subject cannot be spoken of we also prove that there is not anything that can be spoken of, and in proving that the common things cannot be spoken of there is the consequence that the Eleatic subject cannot be talked about.

Gorgias does not argue to a conclusion at eighty-three, but rather asks whether there can be communication and as well points out some "principles" or "facts". The "principles" or "facts" are the separateness of the faculties and their objects, as well as the claim that the objects of the senses "subsist" outside the senses. This latter point is to make explicit what has been assumed before.

At eighty-four Gorgias begins his first argument to bring forth the conclusion that deals with the problem of speaking. We first learn that we reveal (say, declare) by means of a logos. The construction is the instrumental dative. If we take this quite seriously then the logos is depicted as the tool or instrument of discourse. This view of logos again arises, to some extent, in Plato's Cratylus and again the view that words are tools is seen in Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations.

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[1]Although the relationship seems to be like this one does not know whether like hair/hairs, one is composed of the other or whether one is the genus name and the other picks out the various individuals (This problem is one that there is not enought evidence for to solve.).

Gorgias goes on to talk about beings which are further identified as things subsisting outside. What Gorgias wants to pick out with the notion of subsisting is not perfectly clear. We were invited in eighty-three (because chariots and subsisting things are both thought to be beings), to see chariots as things subsisting namely beings. It would seem that the charioteer, the cab driver and so forth are all subsisting things. In light of Gorgias's earlier remarks it becomes apparent that we would also want to include as beings the objects of the sense: e.g. the seen, the heard. One might normally expect that this further group automatically would be included with the former group. However, the objects of the senses must be mentioned independently in order to respect Gorgias's remark that what we see is the visible, as well as his point that there is a difference between the visible and the charioteer--even when what is visible is the charioteer.

Gorgias has things that are, which are thought to subsist, on the one hand and logos on the other. He uses this division to argue against communication. The importance of logos and the things that are is not unknown to Greek philosophy. Plato in his Sophist points out that logos is a thing that is and this claim he uses against monism; proving that when they say "it is one" the monist by his very words has created a plurality. It seems that considerations of onta and logos are used by both Plato and Gorgias, but in different ways, against the Monists (who apparently are not as clear as Gorgias and Plato are that this issue is an important one).

We can credit Gorgias and after him Plato with the recognition of what was previously not considered to be an issue.

Gorgias's claim--the claim that involves our interest in this study--is that "things subsisting outside, namely beings are not logos". To an extent one wants to agree with Gorgias for talk regarding a table is not parallel to or the same sort of thing as the table itself. Were one to display his possessions one would not expect to find beside the toothbrush and bed (a) logos. Granting this one still wants to agree with Plato's argument against a view implicit in Monism that logos is not anything, and hold that logos is something. The truth of the matter seems to borrow from both of these views. This is to say that one would want to include logos as one of the things that are--if such categorizing makes any sense and is at all useful--but still it is not the sort of thing that one hits or bounces or (literally) looks at.

Such an analysis of logos is sketchy but is filled enough such that we can deal with the doctrines we are presented with.

To this point Gorgias has separated logos on one side and onta and hupkeimenon on the other. When introduced to these considerations (in eighty-three) the principle of separation was set forth. From what we have seen before it is clear that with the notion of separateness we expect no overlap between the two categories. From that we are held back. Gorgias's point is that revealing concerns logos and, as he has stated, this is other than beings namely the objects that subsist. The argument has progressed to the point where we cannot be thought to reveal beings. It would seem then that all we can reveal is logos and this offends many people's sensibilities: they suspected they revealed trees etcetera. This point is further

buttressed by the principle of separation such that we are forced to realize that things subsisting and logos are different. As well, it is held that logos cannot be thought to arise or, if one prefers, the alternate translation, cannot become a being namely a thing subsisting.[1]

The argument is clever. There are faults but there is a good deal to recommend the argument. Let us begin the examination of the argument by considering the role of logos. Gorgias began viewing logos as an instrument. As well, Gorgias suggested that logos is what is revealed. The former view presents us revealing something, what is revealed, by a logos. The latter view is that the something revealed is a logos. The two uses is not a slip, or an ambiguity, but a claim. A claim that arises because one does not, according to Gorgias, reveal beings, but only logos. So we reveal by uttering a logos and what we reveal or say is (a) logos.

It is true that when I speak to you I do not say the thing. No lions issue from the mouth. We make sounds in order to utter words, make claims, make a speech and so forth. With Gorgias we can say that by means of a logos we get things said, make a claim and so on.

Naturally one hardly suspects that Gorgias's opponents thought that lions and tigers came from the mouth; but it would not be surprising to think that they thought that when one uttered "tree"

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[1]The two translations differ in that one assumes deletion while the other is more literal. Whichever of the two one chooses, the point is the same.

you at least mentioned something that was out there. Gorgias's opponents are likely correspondence theorists. Gorgias's argument is to an extent to be construed as an attack on this view. A correspondence theorist is going to need to establish some relation between word and object if communication is to be relevant or possible. Gorgias's attack on this view is that there is no relation between word and object. Since a relation is necessary there is no communication.

To those who are not correspondence theorists Gorgias's attack is quite interesting. They, like Gorgias, feel that what we reveal are words. Thus they see his argument to prove, if anything, not that communication is not possible, but that it is not possible on correspondence views.[1]

Having entertained the merits of the argument as an attack on the correspondence theorist, let us take up what might be the traditions way of dealing with Gorgias. The tradition might easily acknowledge that Gorgias effectively demonstrates that one does not reveal or say trees, but that is not the position many hold anyway. What is held is that one speaks about trees such that one says or reveals a word and in so doing one speaks about the thing named. Gorgias's argument is seen to be lacking completeness for it ignores "speaking about". The point of this objection is to allow that we

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[1]Still it must be pointed out that Gorgias took himself to show that communication regarding being was not possible. Perhaps because he only recognized a correspondence position.

reveal by means of a logos and what is revealed is a logos. It holds, however, in addition, that the logos that is revealed is about or concerns things that exist. This point can be seen to be parallel to a point made in the previous section when Gorgias fails to consider thinking about the object.

With this as a reply to Gorgias one wonders who bears the burden of proof. Does Gorgias need to argue against speaking about something or does one have to give speaking about validity before Gorgias needs to consider it? The former alternative seems best. It seems fair to hold that the sceptic needs to show that there is a problem with knowledge or anything else, rather than his opponent having to prove and justify everything. Thus we must reject Gorgias's conclusion.

We must not be completely unsympathetic to the argument that Gorgias has given. We may feel it is necessary to hold that we can speak about things, but still one can hold to a Gorgian position, in as much as it is not clear what the "some" way in which logos reveals is "about" beings. Perhaps this point is where the correspondence theorists, Gorgias's opponents, view is lacking.

Nevertheless, bringing in the notion of speaking about (which Gorgias has not accounted for) does seem legitimate. In the previous section it was felt that one of the errors of Gorgias is his rigidity regarding the separateness of faculties. A similar point is being brought forward here. In claiming that there is speaking about we immediately have reason to see that the claim that speaking is concerned only with logos is false. This is so for the reason we

considered earlier, that logos in some way can be considered a thing which is and, even without this move, we know speaking about is about things which are.

PA records an argument that is similar to the above (979b19-980a7). I say similar for although some of the considerations are the same and although the argument turns on the same points, the argument is offered in a different fashion. Before analyzing the argument let me begin by registering a few complaints with the translation of Loveday and Forester. At 979b20 logō is translated as "by word of mouth". It has already been argued that because of the multiplicity of meanings for logos it would be better not to translate the word. Furthermore, there is no evidence whatsoever for "of mouth". A specific interpretation has been suggested by the translation of Loveday and Forester and there is no reason to suppose it is the right one or include it as part of the translation. Thus, to be neutral we suggest as a translation "by logos". At 980 b3 ho oun tis mē ennoei is translated as "when, therefore one has not a thing in mind". It would be more exact to translate this as "When, therefore one is not thinking". Translating in this fashion is not misleading in these contexts where Gorgias is talking about the thing thought, the thought about etcetera. At 980b4 ennoēsei is translated as "get there". Quite clearly this is inappropriate. "Come to think" is better. Thus I would translate the passage being discussed as "When, therefore, one is not thinking, how will he come to think something (the thing) from another person except by seeing it".

The argument seems to move to the same conclusions as the argument of SE. The problem is how to communicate--which involves a logos--what is seen or heard. The separateness of resources is pointed out. It is then pointed out that what is spoken is not the color or the thing and so on. Then it is queried, how I, who am not thinking about what you are thinking, come to think what you are thinking. Because of the separateness of resources it is pointed out that logos or other tokens will not do to communicate what is thought. They will only do to communicate the logos or token. But what was thought about was not a token, but a color or some such thing. Thus the only way I can come to think what you are thinking is if I see what you are seeing etcetera.

This argument, like SE's version turns on a complete separation of resources. Speaking has to do with logos, hearing the heard and so forth. Gorgias holds that they must be kept separate. We have seen the error in this and can conclude that the argument is wrong. So although the two arguments put the point differently the arguments depend on the same things: separateness of resources, the problems with speaking about something. Thus the criticisms we have made of the previous argument are applicable here.

At eighty-five Gorgias goes on to characterize logos. In so doing he gives us an interesting theory of language and speaking.[1] The object of this discussion is to further the view that we cannot speak about being. What we have learned so far about speaking is

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[1]Plato is often credited as being the first philosopher to develop a theory of language. It would seem that such a view is incorrect.

that it is similar to the operation of the senses. The model that is used is that, on the one hand, there is the activity, e.g. seeing, and, on the other hand, there is an object, e.g. the seen. As well, the activity is restricted to its object and vice versa. Speaking is an activity and logos is its object. "We do not reveal things to another but a logos . . .". Speaking is restricted to logos and vice versa.

The argument holds that we speak a logos. Just what this is like is developed here. We are faced with a certain event and then we utter a logos where previously there was no logos. The task seems to be that of naming and thus, in this instance, an adequate translation of logos could be "word". The concern seems, in part, the coining of the particular word, but as well we are interested in the institution of the correct word. In Gorgias's work these two operations, coining and instituting, have not been adequately separated and Gorgias considers them together;[1] the word-smith here is both coming upon the words and in coming upon the word comes upon a use for a particular object.

The logos, (likely the word), is said to arise in us and arises in us from the things external landing or striking us. That which arises is thought to be expressive of that which has landed or struck us. Suppose one day we are walking down the street. A

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[1]Interestingly enough Plato in his Cratylus seems also to confuse the two issues.

peculiar odor comes upon us. From this a word arises in us which has been brought forth--brought forth out of us presumably--by the odor and is expressive of the odor.

The view offered here quite clearly develops a relationship between word and object. The presentation of the object makes an individual both coin and institute a word; and not just a word by fiat, but rather a word which is expressive of the particular object presented. Because the word is not just used for the object but is expressive of the object we have here (the first) naturalistic account of language. Language bears a certain natural relation to the world.

There are limitations to this account of language which suggests that words arise because of our meeting with objects. This theory is quite clearly a correspondence theory and admits of no other interpretations. Here the part of the business of language is to establish a relationship between words and things. It is not obvious that the correspondence assumption is false, nor is appropriate to attempt to decide that question here. Let it only be pointed out that the theory of Gorgias is limited to such a view, the correspondence view, and that this view is open to question.

As well as being a correspondence theorist Gorgias holds words to be expressive of their objects. This theory of language limits what can be done with words so that we know that the theory has to be false. If the role of words is to express things in the world, then there has been no room left for other tasks. Normally we think there are quite a number of types of speech-acts e.g. telling,

reporting, making up a story, lying, deceiving and so on. Gorgias has limited us to the speech-act of expressing. This is to put unnecessary restraint on the language; we know that the account must be false. Indeed, any account of language that would restrict what we normally do with language cannot be an adequate account.

A number of points are closely related to the last one. We have mentioned that Gorgias account is a naturalistic view. That in itself is enough to condemn the view. I do not propose to argue against naturalism for that would take us too far away from the task at hand and is a point considered well enough by others.

By claiming that words are expressive, Gorgias not only develops a naturalism in which words capture reality, but also has words performing a task that we expect the speaker to perform. Searle has pointed out that words do not refer but people do. Equally obvious is that words do not express but people do.

Another consequence of Gorgias's account of language that proves difficult is his implied account of universals. If words are expressive of things that we meet with, then "color" must be the name of something in the world; so must "man", "animal", and so on. This hypothesis highly unlikely.

If the theory of universals is not problematic enough what about dealing with the words "and", "as", "or", and "likely". Surely there is nothing in the world that we meet with that these words are expressive of. And if even this is not problematic, how could Gorgias account for his earlier examples of Scylla and Chimera. For these too are names.

It seems clear then that the above problems are so severe that we cannot accept the account of language that Gorgias has offered us. But whether true or not the attempt is noteworthy as an account of language and even more so because it seems to be the first philosophic account of language.

Since being based on a false account of language, the argument Gorgias goes on to give against speaking need not be accepted. But let us continue the examination of the argument and see how we can protect ourselves from its conclusion.

With his point that a word arises in us which is expressive of the thing, Gorgias hopes to be able to deny that we can reveal anything about the world with our language. There seems to be three different interpretations of why Gorgias felt it followed that we cannot reveal to one another. The first interpretation is by the nature of revealing, the second is by the failure to set standards or maintain a procedure, and the third is by order of dependancy.

We begin with the nature of revealing; considering an example. Suppose I were to tell you all I know about radios. That is, you have no other source of information than me. Given this situation we would not expect you to do any <u>revealing</u> regarding the situation. How could you? I cannot expect you to come up with anything other than what I have said. Thus you can reveal nothing to me. To bring the point back to Gorgias, we imagine the source of information to be the world rather than me. Since the world does all the revealing the words can do none; and thus one cannot reveal to one another.

The argument seen this way does not persuade one that

communication is not possible. If we distinguish speech-acts such as revealing, giving new information and so on, from re-iterating, telling, reporting, then we do see why the former set of speech-acts are unavailable to us (when we assume Gorgias's account of language), but we do not see why the latter are unavailable to us. Gorgias's argument, on this interpretation, can be criticized for his argument only works with a certain kind of speech act; a point he fails to bring out.

There is one objection to this as an account of the argument. The verb translated as "reveal" can also mean "say" or "declare". If either of these are used as a translation instead of "reveal", then the argument is not even minimally persuasive. Because the verb can have all three meanings, it is hard to believe that Gorgias could have ignored the latter set of speech-acts. He may have, but one has to be somewhat suspicious of this interpretation.

The second way the argument might be taken is what has been called the failure to set standards or maintain a procedure. As we will see, this interpretation does not (like the previous interpretation) ignore speech-acts such as say or tell, but it does make for a very poor argument.

Let us, again, suppose that words arise in us and are expressive of the thing. One thing that may prevent us telling or revealing anything to another is the constant need for the word to arise. Because there is this constant need one would never get on to saying something. Let us distinguish laying down a procedure--the word arising--and following that procedure--saying that this is

red.[1] If we are constantly dependent on the world and the occasion to begin to lay down the procedure, we are never going to get on with the business of following the procedure.

Unfortunately there is no reason given, or apparent, why we have to have the word arise on each and every occasion. One could well imagine a variation on this interpretation of the argument so that the considerations of Descartes' first meditation are included. In this case Gorgias's argument would demand a reply. But, as it stands, since no reason for not being able to set a standard has been given, we can reply to this interpretation of the argument by pointing out that one can set a standard and remember it. Thus if this were the correct account of the argument, Gorgias has offered an interesting account of language but a very poor argument for the inability to communicate. As such, this interpretation of Gorgias is the least likely that we will offer.

The last and best interpretation of Gorgias's argument is to view Gorgias as making a simple point of dependency. This alternative is closely related to our first alternative, but instead of using the meaning of "revealing" to argue the point, it suggests that since the world reveals or give us the word, we cannot have the word also give us or reveal the world.

This view of the argument has the argument trading on the notion of the world giving a logos which is expressive and expression

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[1] The importance of making such distinctions when concerned with the philosophy of language has been pointed out to me by Richard Bosley.

itself. This sounds like the world makes a word arise and thereby makes expressions and expressing come to be. We then have the world doing or causing the expressing and revealing. Now no room is left for words to express the world or anything else: the world is in control of expressing. Thus Gorgias questions how the word could be revealor of the world.

To object to this argument we point out that even were the world to give us words it is the speaker who expresses by uttering words. If we disallow the notion that words, which are dependant on the world, expressing, then we also block the move that the external is the revealor or expressor. With this we can give the revealing and expressing back to the individual and do not feel that we have the world being revealor or expressor of words. Now we allow the world to be the generator of words, but not the revealor.[1]

This last interpretation of the argument seems to be the best of the three alternatives offered. On this account Gorgias is not offering us a howler. It thus seems likely that the last interpretation is correct. The other two accounts though not clearly false seem unlikely; and thus are ruled out.

Gorgias, in eighty-six, attempts to strengthen the conclusion of the argument given at eighty-five. Up until this point logos and

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[1]Needless to say, even the admission that the world is the generator of words is too much, but we allow this conceit here (having already discussed the subject somewhat obliquely when it was suggested that one of the problems of Gorgias's theory of language is his correspondence assumption, the search for a relationship between word and object).

beings have been radically separated into different categories. One of our criticisms of Gorgias has been that although a logos is not like a table, still were it possible to catalogue all the things that are it would be appropriate to include logos in that record. Here Gorgias complies with this wish; he takes up the Platonic point that logos is a thing that is.

We mentioned in the analysis of our translation that the "so that" in the first sentence in paragraph eighty-six could be taken in two ways. One way would be to understand Gorgias to be asserting this clause, the other way would be to understand this result to be governed by the "is not possible"; hence Gorgias would be denying that subsisting things can be revealed from a subsisting thing. It seems quite clear that Gorgias cannot mean the former, but must mean the latter. Were Gorgias to mean the former he would be in direct contradiction with his claim (found later in eighty-six) that the external things do not make clear the nature of each other. On this interpretation Gorgias's whole argument here would break down. When we understand Gorgias in the latter way, then he is denying that subsisting things can be revealed. This is in harmony with the claim that the external things do not make clear the nature of each other and makes a very nice argument.

Gorgias begins by arguing that we cannot say that the visible, audible etcetera subsist in the way in which logos subsists. The consequence is that the possibility for things subsisting namely beings to be revealed from a thing subsisting namely a being falls away because of the two, the visible and the audible on the one hand

and logos on the other hand, are very different. Gorgias here is defending against logos as previously understood being able to reveal and also logos inability to reveal even when it is thought to be an object.[1]

The issue Gorgias is dealing with can be put as follows: If logos is a being namely a thing subsisting, can it reveal other things subsisting namely beings?[2] Gorgias's answer is no. The argument is that even if logos does subsist (or is an object), it still is considerably different from what we have previously seen to be ta hupokeimena kai ta onta. The reason for the differences has been shown earlier. There the point was argued in terms of separation of objects and faculties. Here it is pointed out that the visible is seen through one organ and logos is comprehended through another.[3] We know from earlier comments that both the objects and the organ appropriate to each faculty must be kept independent from any other faculty. That remains unchanged. These points force the conclusion that logos can have nothing to do with the many external things; thus logos cannot point out the many external things. Logos, Gorgias

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[1] I use the word "object" to bring out the force of allowing logos to be a being namely a thing subsisting. Still, it is not held that logos is just another tree or like another tree.

[2] By "beings" on, as usual refers to the audible, the visible and so forth.

[3] If it was not clear before it should now be clear that Gorgias's analysis of speech like his analysis of mind puts these things under the heading of senses.

suggests, is as incapable of pointing out the external things as the external things are incapable of making clear the natures of each other.[1]

From Gorgias's argument we have found that even though we might allow logos to be one of the things that are, that still is not enough of an admission to allow one with logos to be able to reveal or to say. It has been argued by Gorgias that within the things that are there are distinctions with the result that logos, although something that is, is importantly different from the seen and heard. Thus though logos is an object, it is distinct from other objects and cannot reveal about those objects.

Inasmuch as this argument depends on the ultimate separateness of faculties and the failure to appreciate speaking about, the argument is in error. These mistakes have arisen enough such that those problems should be perfectly clear to us. What is nice about this argument is that Gorgias is right in suggesting that even when we allow logos to be a thing that is, we still must distinguish it from other things that exist; for they are considerably different. We do not object to this point in itself, but to the claim that those differences yield the failure to be able to communicate.

This ends the last argument of Gorgias against communication

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[1] Gorgias takes it that all would agree that objects do not reveal each other. That is the visible does not tell us about the audible and so on.

as recorded by SE.[1]

An argument is given by PA, from 980b7-16 that is not seen in the work of SE. In SE it was argued that one could not speak or reveal about beings because of the divorce between logos and onta. The last argument was to admit logos as an onta, but then point out that because of the radical differences between logos and the visible or audible and so forth, logos could not point out the visible etcetera. The argument recorded in PA also points out the divorce between logos and onta such that logos will not reveal onta. PA then records an argument which seems to make the radical move of allowing for both expression and understanding.

What he then questions is that although we may understand something and may come to understand something by means of logos, what I understand cannot be the same as what you say or understand. So whereas the account of SE seems to have three major arguments: (1) nothing can exist (2) but if it does exist, nothing can be understood, (3) but if it can be understood, nothing can be communicated, the account of PA adds a fourth one, namely that if something is communicated, what is communicated cannot be what the communicator understood.

The reason why Gorgias suggests that hearer and the speaker cannot have the same thing in mind is that if they do, then one thing

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[1]It should be observed that the arguments against communication are of a very general nature. The arguments are not restricted to being. Again, it must be understood that by "being" Gorgias gives the name for something that names all beings. Thus arguing about beings allows one to conclude concerning being.

would be two. That which is in the speaker's mind would have to be there and at the same time it would have to be in the hearer's mind.

This argument would be a fine one if communicating were like handing around a book. A book cannot be both here and there at the same time. The one cannot be two. However, we should not view speaking in this way. The point is obvious enough, but let me give a simple argument that will dispose of the "giving" view of speaking.[1]

If speaking were like giving, then what one gave would be part of one's possession. That is one does not lose one's knowledge of what one is speaking even though the listener comes to know something he did not previously know. (In giving a book, one does, however, lose possession of the book.) Therefore the giving model of speaking is not correct. Hence Gorgias's considerations about having the same thing in mind (when understood literally) do not apply to speaking. His argument, then, does not work.

Gorgias's argument is developed further. Gorgias next gives up the assumption that the same thing could not be in two places; he allows that the same thing could be in several people. Such an allowance, however, is of little interest to us for we have seen that there is not a giving, there is nothing to be in the same place. Nevertheless, let us understand the argument as if his allowance helps us. This will permit us to explore the argument though, as

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[1]We give an argument against the "giving" model of speaking rather than an account of speaking because it can be done much more easily.

has been suggested, ultimately the argument is doomed to being unable to convince us.

Gorgias argues that even though the same thing is said to be communicated to several people it could not appear similar to each of them. Thus although we state the message and each person has the same thing in mind, it will not take on the same meaning for each person. Thus communication is thought to be blocked.[1] The reason why the same thing appears different to each person is via the difference in the situations of presentation and because the individuals themselves differ. Gorgias goes on to say that if these problems did not present themselves there would be the problem that what one perceives at one moment is not similar to what one perceives next; for we perceive different things by the different senses and different things on different occasions. Thus since there are so many factors involved even in one person one is thereby prevented from perceiving the same thing as another.[2]

This argument offers two sets of reasons for the difference of appearance for the same thing. Let us consider them separately. The first set of reasons is the difference among individuals and their situation. Some life can be given to this objection. Differences among situations and individuals will, for example, make a

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[1]Actually the most powerful conclusion the argument rightfully can draw is that although one can communicate something, one cannot communicate what one intended to.

[2]"Perceive" meaning perceive what was said.

difference to hearing someone say: "The Russians won the latest Canada-Russia hockey series". If Russia won the last thirteen, one would think nothing of it, whereas if Canada had never lost one, it would be very significant. Were one a Canadian (as opposed to a Russian) the news could take on a very different significance. Thus who it is and the situation--understood loosely here--will make a great deal of difference to the significance one attaches to what is said. Still this is not at all to change the meaning. All equally well get the message and have understood what has happened. They just attach a different significance to it. Thus though some credence can be given to Gorgias's argument, quite clearly the point does not force anything like the conclusion that communication is blocked.

The second set of reasons is more obscure. Gorgias argues that what some one man perceives differs as he uses his different senses. It further varies as time passes. From this Gorgias concludes that what I perceive cannot possibly be the same as someone else. This is taken to force the conclusion that what one person understands cannot be the same as what another person understands. We can object to Gorgias's argument about things having different forces on different occasions in the same way we did with Gorgias's first set of reasons. This is by pointing out that the meaning of what is said is the same and understood to be the same, but that the significance attached may be different. The point of the diversity of the senses is obscure. Presumably what Gorgias means is that what one gains from seeing a man, as opposed to feeling a man

as opposed to tasting a man and so on, is all very different. Because of this complexity another man is unable to perceive the same thing. However, the problem posed was that we could not understand the same thing by the use of words. Gorgias has not shown how the two problems relate to each other. Furthermore, it has not been shown that we do perceive different things, for all that has been demonstrated is that our perceptions are complex. This point is well taken but irrelevant. At best what can be deemed from this complexity in perception is that we may concentrate on different things in our perceptions. It might even be argued that we concentrate on different things said. But this is not an argument against understanding in communication but only that when we understand one person will likely concentrate his attention on something different than another person. One can accept this point, but still one feels that communication is possible.

Here ends the additional arguments as recorded by PA as well as the third hypothesis. Thus Gorgias's On Non-Being or On Nature comes to an end.

Conclusion

We have now seen and analyzed all the arguments of Gorgias of Leontini. A summary of all the stages would be of no advantage. Yet there are points that need to be emphasized.

The arguments in the first section of Gorgias's work are quite clear. We knew where Gorgias stood and were able to examine the arguments. The exception to this was the issue of whether "being is being" is a legitimate translation. We have tried to show that it is. Problems arose when we turned to the second and third sections. Here the difficulties were not so much concerned with the individual arguments but the overall attempt. These problems were: (1) the translation of ta onta without the article, (2) the relationship between the first, and second and third sections of Gorgias's work, (3) the relationship between to on and ta onta. The problems, I believe have been adequately dealt with. We saw grammatical as well as logical reasons for reading onta and ta onta as "beings". The first section was seen as an attack on the more erudite cosmologists. The work of these cosmologists was, incidently, the theoretical underpinings of all. Thus the overthrowing of them is by far the most significant move on Gorgias's part. The second and third sections were directed at the less erudite or more practical works of philosophers. We came to see "being" as the name for all the beings. This point further clarifies the above point that the works of the

erudite are the underpinings to the considerations of the less erudite. As well it brings into focus how arguing that beings can not be communicated allows one to conclude that being is not communicated.

In our work on Gorgias we not only became clear about what the individual arguments were but also we became clearer about to on. In the second chapter of this thesis before examining the arguments we spent a good deal of time discussing what might be meant by to on. Those thoughts apply specifically to Gorgias, but they offer us a fairly clear way to proceed with Parmenides, Plato, Plotinus or anyone else who talks about being. No doubt each author will have to be examined afresh, but the proper method of taking up the problem is obvious. We have then, to some extent, taken the mystery out of talk about being. That seems an important thing to have done and an important thing to continue.

In this work we have uncovered a philosopher who philosophizes about language and speaking. The work done by Gorgias on this topic is of great interest. He stands out for this in presocratic philosophy. By far the most important thing we have done is shown that Gorgias rates very highly as a presocratic philosopher. There have been no arguments to prove that Gorgias is a good philosopher. That is unnecessary. The point is obvious just by the need for careful examination of Gorgias's arguments. The arguments are impressive; too impressive to ignore. Denniston's abhorence of Gorgias's "contribution" to Greek prose style seems to have barred his appreciation

of a worthy philosopher. It is unfortunate that this failure is not unique with Denniston.

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